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ANIMADVERSIONS

UPON

THE DEFENCE

OF

CALVINISTIC DOCTRINES,

CONTAINED IN THE

REV. E. BICKERSTETH'S

Christian Student.

BY

ABRAHAM SCOTT.

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hate to see things done by halves; if it be right, do it boldly: if it be wrong, leave it undone.—GILPIN.

SHEFFIELD:

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ANIMADVERSIONS.

THE right of the author now before us, to publish a defence of Calvinism, is indisputable; yet his manner of doing it may constitute a just ground of complaint, and render it needful to warn his readers of the snares which he has laid for them. A title page ought to give some idea of what is contained in the book; for when articles are vended under a false label, many may be induced to purchase what they did not want, and what they cannot keep in the house without danger to the inmates. According to the laws of civilized warfare, a belligerent should not have entered our harbour under either a friendly or a neutral flag; but should have hoisted his own colours, that we might have been prepared either to fight or fly, according to our own discretion.

When a book comes forth under the title of the *Christian Student*, designed to assist Christians in general in acquiring religious knowledge, with lists of books adapted to the various classes of society, the purchaser may be grievously disappointed, when he finds the whole drift of it is to support the peculiar doctrines of John Calvin: for this may be what he did not want, and those who want a work of that kind, may never expect to meet with it under such a designation. This book, by the established literary and religious reputation of its author, its fascinating title, its adaptation to the various classes of society, and in particular to all students at the Universities, may obtain a very extensive circulation: and as it is written to disseminate, in the most insinuating manner, erroneous views of the gospel, it requires an antidote.

Our author has vigorously entered the field of controversy, but does not appear to wish for an antagonist, as 'he always gets the better when he argues alone.' Like Naphtali, he giveth goodly words; and pleads for peace and concord among professors of every creed and denomination. But his actions and his words are at variance, for he deals about his blows with all his might and dexterity; and that this may be received without one murmuring word, he immediately proceeds to give a lecture on kindness, forbearance, and brotherly love; which is so full of holy oil, that it runs down from our beards to the skirts of our garments. Then he again smites us hip and thigh, with what kind of weapon we need not say, and immediately we are told how good and how pleasant it

is for brethren to dwell together in unity: and thus he proceeds throughout. Hence when he makes his finest speeches, 'those who know his tricks will keep out of his way.'

It appears that the reason why he vindicates Calvinism, is, because those who take the other side of the question are men of perverse minds, who destroy the glory of the gospel, and ruin immortal souls; and if we are not willing to bear all this odium, we must stand on our own defence. We are not in the less danger, by all the professed meekness and kindness of our opponent. We do not mean to impeach his sincerity; but even this affords us no protection. There was a period when Paul thought he ought to do many things against Jesus of Nazareth; and our Saviour said the time will come, when those who kill you will think they do God service. His sincerity may be of advantage to himself, as Paul obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly. In the meantime we are to take care of ourselves, in whatever garb we may be assailed. The old enemy, with whom all Christians have to do, sometimes goes about like a roaring lion, and at other times transforms himself into an angel of light: but in whatever manner his attacks are made, we are to resist him stedfast in the faith. So, whether error stalk forth like a fury from the nether regions, or appear in the costume of a messenger from a better country, we are to be on our guard against its destructive influence.

With this sentiment our author concurs; he says, 'There is a prevalent notion, that the simple statement of truth is a sufficient confutation of error. Such persons forget the advantage that error has against truth in its falling in with the natural principles of the heart. Exposure of error, in a controversial form, is a prominent part of the Epistles to the unsettled Churches. The duty of controversy, under many circumstances, is perfectly clear. We must earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.——It is no small sorrow to see some introducing ruinous errors, and bringing on themselves swift destruction. Many are misled by unscriptural sentiments of which they never perhaps hear the just and sound refutation. A powerful treatise taking an erroneous side of a question is read, and many are disposed to concur in it, till God graciously raises up a writer on the other side, who shows them how far the first has deviated from the truth.'*

In this manner he furnishes us with an apology, for showing how far he himself has deviated from the truth. We shall now introduce his controversy. 'The statements,' he says, 'of some eminently holy men, four of them bishops, and the fifth the celerated Boyle, may place this controversy in a juster light than any private observations, and may tend to the instruction and edification of those whose sincere aim is to seek both truth and peace.'

* We have omitted references to the quotations, for the sake of saving room: but those who wish to compare them with Mr. Bickersteth's book, will find most of them from page 124 to 138. Second Edition. We have not given a reference to passages of scripture; for as these are very numerous, it would have taken up much room and interrupted the reading, and we suppose the reader would choose rather to use his concordance at times than have to meet with so many interruptions. And as we suppose the language of scripture to be understood, we have not placed the passages between marks of quotations.

'Bishop Davenant says, the act of reprobation in God, as that of 'election, is from eternity. That no one was foredamned of God 'from eternity whom he did not foresee wrapt up in the guilt of 'damnation. That the original cause of all evil which drowns 'men in perdition, is not found in God's reprobating, but in the 'reprobates themselves. That there is no single person which may 'not attain eternal life, by repenting, believing, and persevering 'according to the terms of the gospel.'

We should wish to know, in what part of the scripture this decree of reprobation is recorded; for it is in vain to talk about its causes and properties, without first ascertaining its existence. That God should have doomed from eternity, the greatest part of mankind to inevitable damnation, is contrary to the whole tenor of divine revelation; which declares that God is loving and kind unto all: that he is not willing that any of us should perish: that he would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. He commands all men every where to repent, that their iniquities may be blotted out; and he sends his Holy Spirit to give all needful assistance. He declares upon oath, that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; and calls upon all the ends of the earth to look unto him and be saved. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; so that his Son is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. Can this be reconciled with an eternal decree of reprobation?

Is it credible, that God should have told us, that some are consigned to heaven and all the rest to hell before they are born, and that it is impossible to reverse the doom of any individual; and after he has told us this, that he should offer mercy to the reprobates, send his messengers to warn them to flee from the wrath to come, declare his willingness and ability to save them, and call upon them to believe in Christ that they may be saved: and then increase their condemnation for refusing the offered mercy? If the reprobates are as inevitably doomed to hell fire as the devil and his angels, in what light are we to regard God's offers of mercy to them? The only mercy they were ever capable of receiving, was to be cut off in their infancy, before they had committed any actual sin; that they might have gone to hell with a good conscience; and not have had to be tantalized through life with mock offers of salvation, which they could not receive, and which will increase their eternal misery.

The bishop here affirms, that the original cause which drowns men in perdition, is in the reprobates themselves: that God finds them from eternity wrapt up in the guilt of damnation. But he does not inform us who put them into that state, so long before they were born; nor what means they have since had of extricating themselves; and unless we knew these things how are we to determine, whether their reprobation is their fault or their misfortune? To punish men for not doing impossibilities is both cruel and unjust. And if men are born in a state of damnation, and have no means of escape, it can never be made to appear that their destruction is of themselves.

But the bishop affirms, that there is no single person, which may not attain eternal life by repenting and believing. So we hope and allow. But how does this accord with his Calvinistic principles? Can the eternal decree of reprobation be broken by repentance? This divine was at the synod of Dort; and there maintained, that Christ only died for a part of mankind: In what sense then are those to be saved by repenting and believing, who from eternity are excluded from all interest in Christ? Moreover, the divines of that synod maintained, that no man could repent or believe the gospel, without that special grace which God will give to none but the elect. For what purpose then can such a person say that reprobates may attain eternal life by repenting and believing, unless it is to bewilder the minds of his readers, that the revolting deformity of his monstrous system may pass unobserved?

In the next place Archbishop Leighton is brought forward, who says:—'Every thing that happens throughout the several ages of 'the world, proceeds in the same order, and the same precise manner, 'as the eternal mind at first intended it should. And accordingly as 'all things in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, are daily 'regulated and directed by the Eternal King, in the same precise man-'ner were they from eternity ordered and disposed by him. These 'things are safe to believe: but what perverseness is it, to break 'into the sacred repositories of heaven, and pretend to accommodate 'those secrets of the divine kingdom to the measure and methods of 'our weak capacities? I am astonished when I hear professors of 'theology, talking presumptuously about the order of the divine de-'crees. Paul viewing the vast abyss, started back and cried with a 'loud voice,—O the depth! Think and speak of God and his se-'crets, with fear and trembling, but dispute very little about them; 'and if you would not undo yourselves, beware of disputing with 'him; if you transgress in any thing, blame yourselves; if 'you do any thing good or repent of evil, offer thanksgiving to God?'

It will be seen that Leighton here informs us, that every thing in this lower world proceeds as God intended it should. That is, all the thefts, rapes, and murders; every act of villainy, treachery and filthiness; and all the corruptions of religion, even down to Arminianism itself, proceed in the same manner, as the eternal mind at first intended. Then he exclaims against the presumption of mortals in breaking into the sacred repositories of heaven; which, in plain English, is, that we must let him explore the secrets above, and discover that all the wickedness of man originated in the divine mind: and throughout all the ages of the world has proceeded as God intended it should; but we are to make no reply; for if we touch his Babel it cannot stand. It is himself that breaks into the repositories of heaven, and raises a fabric of metaphysical speculations which contradict the most express declarations of God's word: such as these: He has set life and death before us; a blessing and a curse: God is not tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: He will render to every man according to the deeds done in the

body: there is no unrighteousness with God. It is therefore the utmost rashness of mortals, to make God either directly or indirectly the author of sin; as they do, who endeavour to prove that every act of man is the inevitable result of a previous decree. And they moreover suppose that God has told his creatures, that he has appointed every action of their lives before they were born; and though they could not avoid any one of them, yet he will punish them to all eternity for fulfilling his own decrees.

This author tells us, he is astonished to hear men talk presumptiously about the divine decrees. But if there be any truth in his previous statement, or if he himself believed it, what can he see in the conduct of men to excite his astonishment? When men are talking ever so presumptuously, is not every thing proceeding as the Almighty intended it should?

He says, Paul, considering the subject cried, — O the depth! But what subject, we ask, was the apostle at that time considering? It ought to be remembered that he had not been brought up at the College of Geneva; he had not been at the Synod of Dort; nor had he seen the Lambeth Articles: and those who suppose that he had any such thing as Calvinistic election and reprobation in his mind are under a gross mistake. The apostle was then speaking of the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; but the rejection of the Jews did not consign them to inevitable destruction. If they repented they were to be again engrafted in the same olive tree, from which they had been broken off; and it was the apostle's desire and prayer to God that they might be saved. On the other hand, the calling of the gentiles to be God's Church and people, was not an unconditional appointment to eternal life; for they were to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. And the apostle says, Be not high-minded but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them that fell, severity; but towards thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off. Consequently, the exclamation, O the depth, has no relation to Calvinistic election and reprobation. Such a thought never entered the apostle's mind, nor is it any where to be found in the Word of God. But when such an horrible opinion is set before us, we may properly exclaim, O the depths of the folly and rashness of mortals! O the depths of Satan!

He proceeds to say, 'If you would not undo yourselves beware of disputing with Him.' We answer, that exploding the rash speculations of mortals, is not disputing with God. But if men do dispute with the Almighty, it seems that they only fulfil his own decrees: and are they to beware of doing that? How is this to be understood? And how are men in danger of undoing themselves, let them dispute as they will? Can any of the elect be lost, or any of the reprobates be saved? Does not every dispute and every thing else, proceed throughout all ages, as the eternal mind at first intended it should? He says, 'if you transgress in any thing blame yourselves.' But why so, when they have only done what they were decreed to do;

and what they could not avoid? If there be any blame it devolves upon the ruling principle, and not upon the passive instrument. We might have supposed that our sins grieved God at his heart, and might have abhorred ourselves as in dust and ashes; had we not been told that every thing has proceeded according to the divine mind; and consequently, what we have done was unavoidable on our part, and pleasing to the Almighty; for he must be pleased with such a breach of his law, as is necessary to the fulfilment of his decrees. What reason then can there be to repent and take any blame to ourselves?

Thus we see Leighton launches into the eternal councils of Jehovah to the full length of his line, however far he may be from the bottom of the ocean; then he cries out against the rashness of those who break into the sacred repositories of heaven. He finds that every thing proceeds in this lower world as God has decreed it should; then he is astonished at the proceedings of men, and exhorts them to blame themselves when they transgress, and advises them to beware of what they do, lest they should ruin their own souls. How are we to make these things hang together? How can we believe one part, any further than as we disbelieve the other? Yet this precious morsel of absurdity and contradiction, is selected from the whole mass of English literature, to remove all disputes for the future, and form the minds of students in divinity; especially those who are to be the future teachers of mankind.

Our author likewise presents us with the following note from Leighton. 1 Pet. ii. 8. 'Disobedient; *whereunto also they were ap-*'*pointed.* This the apostle adds for the further satisfaction of be-'lievers in this point, how it is that so many reject Christ, telling 'them plainly, that the secret purpose of God is accomplished in 'this, having determined to glorify his justice on impenitent sinners. 'Here it were easier to lead you into a deep than to lead you forth 'again. But to give causes of God's decrees without himself, is 'neither agreeable with the nature of God nor with the scriptures.'

In stating, that there is no cause of God's decrees without himself, this divine contradicts Bishop Davenant; who says, the cause of reprobation is in the reprobates themselves. If what Leighton here affirms be true, sin is not the cause of man's destruction; he was appointed to this fate without any reason but the pleasure of the Almighty. He says the apostle states this for the satisfaction of believers. What kind of satisfaction it can afford, to be told that men are appointed to disobedience, for which they are to be eternally punished, we cannot conjecture; but we think it might damp their satisfaction to remember, that it is yet altogether uncertain, whether they themselves are not the subjects of a similar reprobation. A proper examination of the passage will show that it was the punishment to which they were appointed in consequence of their disobedience: 'It cannot signify that God ordained the 'Jews to disobedience; for then this disobedience would be a com-'pliance with the divine ordinance, and so could not deserve the 'name of disobedience: nor could this disobedience be objected to

'them as their crime; unless compliance with God's ordinance be so, 'and it be a fault to be such, as God by his immutable decree hath 'ordained we should be; or it should render men criminal, and 'obnoxious to punishment, that they have not made void God's 'absolute decree, or done what was made impossible for them to do. 'Wherefore this passage cannot signify, that the Jews were ap-'pointed to disobedience, but only that being disobedient they were 'appointed to fall and perish.'

In the next place, our author says, 'Bishop Hall wrote an excel-'lent treatise, entitled the *Way of Peace;* to pick out what might 'sound towards concord, he sums up his views of predestination as 'follows:—

'There is no son of Adam to whom God hath not promised, that 'if he shall believe in Christ, repent, and persevere, he shall be 'saved. This general will of God must be proclaimed to all men 'without exception, and ought to be so received. All men, within 'the pale of the church especially, have from the mercy of God, 'such common helps towards this belief and salvation, that the 'neglect thereof makes any of them guilty of their own condem-'nation. Besides the general will of God, he hath eternally willed 'and decreed, to give a special and effectual grace to those who are 'predestinate. It is not the pre-vision of faith or any other grace 'or act of man, whereupon this decree is founded, but the mere 'pleasure of God appointing to save those whom he hath chosen 'in Christ. This decree of election is absolute and unchangeable, 'and from everlasting. God doth not actually damn, or appoint any 'soul to damnation, without the consideration and respect of sin.'

The above, we are informed, was written to do away with all disputes for the future, and give satisfaction to all parties: an end which it has not yet answered; long as it has been before the world. But the question is, what improvement is here made in any former statement of Calvinism? Calvin himself says, 'All men are 'not created in an equal condition; but eternal life is pre-ordained to 'some, eternal damnation to others.'—The first article of the synod of Dort is, 'That God, by an absolute decree, hath elected to sal-'vation a very small number of men, without any regard to their 'faith or obedience whatsoever; and excluded from saving grace all 'the rest of mankind, and appointed them, by the same decree, to 'eternal damnation, without any regard to their infidelity or impeni-'tency.' Wherein does Hall's statement make any change for the better? Does it not leave the same number of reprobates, equally excluded from all saving grace, and consequently from all possibility of salvation? He affirms, indeed, that God appoints none to damnation without a consideration of sin. But how does this agree with his declaration, that others are appointed to heaven without any regard to their faith and obedience? The unbelief of the reprobate was not more conspicuous, than the faith of the elect: and if the former was seen, how did the latter come to be overlooked? Would he have us to believe, that the Almighty is more keen-sighted in the discovery of evil, than of that which is good? If none are appointed

to hell without a consideration of their sins, it can never be proved that others are appointed to heaven without a consideration of their faith and obedience. But granting what he contends for, how does it mend the matter, since the reprobates cannot avoid sin? and therefore no more deserve punishment than those who are innocent yet the sins, which they are born under the necessity of committing add intensively to their eternal flames. On this account we give the preference to the following statement of Calvin: 'If we cannot 'assign a reason why God thinks his own worthy of mercy, except 'because it so pleases him; neither shall we have any other ground 'for his reprobating others, except his will.'

Hall tells us, that there is not a son of Adam to whom God has not promised, that if he shall believe in Christ, he shall be saved But what is the advantage of such a promise to those who have no power to believe, and who have been eternally excluded from divine mercy? The promises, we are told must be proclaimed to all men and should be so received and believed. But we ask what obligations those are under, who were not chosen in Christ, to believe that he has any salvation for them: and what better would they be, if they should believe such a falsehood?

The bishop speaks of common helps which men have towards their salvation, the neglect whereof makes them guilty. But what kind of helps can those have towards salvation, whom God has eternally rejected from all possibility of being saved? A dead man is not helped by having food set before him, nor a blind man by a lighted candle. The ordinances of the gospel and the influences of the Spirit are great helps to those for whom Christ died: but nothing on earth or in heaven can be any help towards the salvation of those, who are eternally excluded from the Saviour's merits and grace: all their merciful helps can only serve to augment their condemnation.

Our author next introduces Bishop Sanderson and Robert Boyle, but they do not take either side of the question. He then proceeds to say, 'It is the more important to give these testimonies, because 'of the indistinct and unsatisfactory manner in which this subject 'has often been treated in pulpits, and even in books, and the unjust 'obloquy cast upon those who only held the doctrines of the 'Reformation.' It seems, that in his opinion, these testimonies are to remove all misconceptions of the subject before us, to prevent all future controversy, and give satisfaction to all parties: but we must acknowledge that we cannot view them in this light; they prove no point which has been disputed: they elucidate no difficulty: they remove no objection: they leave all who are not elected without saving grace, and consequently, without a possibility of escaping the damnation of hell. These writers endeavour to throw reprobation on the back ground, where it can scarcely be discerned; yet at the same time, they avow other principles, from which it follows by inevitable consequence. However Calvinism may be disguised or diluted in the statements of its most ingenious and guarded of its advocates, it always involves the horrible decree

of reprobation; and the most rigid predestinarian can go no farther.

He proceeds to say, 'Personal election by no means implies the 'rejection of such truths as Christ's dying for all—God's loving the 'world—and not wishing the death of a sinner. These are indu- 'bitable verities, revealed for the unspeakable consolation of sinful 'creatures, and to be freely proclaimed, unfettered by any artificial 'systems, to the whole human race.' Here by personal, we presume he means Calvinistic election; and affirms, that this is not at variance with Christ dying for all. But Calvin himself thought otherwise, and the divines at the synod of Dort state, 'That Jesus 'Christ hath not suffered death for any others but those elect only; 'having neither any interest nor commandment of his Father to 'make any satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.' And the generality of Calvinists have taken, and still take the same view of the subject: but some few have been induced to abandon this untenable position, as Milner, Scott, and Bickersteth; but even these change, without improving the old system; for while they contend that Christ died for all, they maintain that saving grace is given to none but the elect: and without that grace Christ will profit them nothing. Thus, before those who are perishing with hunger, they place the bread of life, but in such a situation that they cannot reach it: the eternal decree that has passed to give them no special grace, keeps it for ever out of their reach. Therefore, this new mode of expounding the gospel, leaves the non-elect where it found them; without Christ, having no hope in the world. If it make any change in their condition, it is by bringing upon them greater condemnation, for denying the Lord that bought them: and this is one of the verities which is to afford them unspeakable consolation.

We are then told, that election by no means implies the rejection of such truths, 'as, God's loving the world, and not wishing the death of a sinner.' But by what evidence can this be supported? In what manner can the Almighty be said to love those whom he has eternally rejected from all saving mercy and grace? If he is not wishing the death of a sinner, why does not the Holy Spirit apply that remedy which Christ died to procure, as it does to others who are equally sinful and rebellious? It is granted that the elect are originally no better than others, yet God can save them consistently with all his perfections, because Christ has died for them, which opens the way for the application of saving grace. And if Christ has died for all, what hinders the application of saving grace to every man? The hindrance cannot be in those to whom it is denied: for neither their disposition nor practice is any worse than that of others, and if the same methods were taken with them they would be saved. The same price has been paid for their ransom, and they are equally willing and equally worthy to have it made available, and yet the Almighty will not give them that grace which has been purchased for them, and on which their salvation depends, and yet we are required to believe, that he loves them, and is not willing that they should perish. How can these things be?

So long as Calvinistic election is retained, the declaration, that Christ died for all, can only serve to render God's want of love to all the rest, and his desire for their destruction the more conspicuous and incontestible. Such is the result of Mr. B.'s indubitable verities, revealed for the unspeakable consolation of sinful creatures.

The following is another sample of his verities, 'The promises of 'God are to be generally proposed, and *ought* to be received by all. 'It greatly aggravates guilt when any reject them. If they do reject 'them, it is entirely their own fault; but if they receive them, it is 'entirely from the grace of God. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed 'thyself, but in me is thy help.* Here is enough general truth to 'unite us as fellow Christians in seeking to save, first, our own 'souls, and then the souls of our fellow-creatures.' It is here affirmed, that the promises of God are to be generally proposed, and freely proclaimed to the whole human race. So we should suppose; but if some are unconditionally elected to heaven, and no other person can be saved, what can be the benefit of such a proclamation to the world? with what sincerity can it be sent from above, or with what consistency can any man deliver it to his fellow-creatures? We are told, that when this proclamation is not received, it greatly aggravates guilt; but this wants evidence and explanation. Bishop Hall, in his excellent treatise on the *Way of Peace*, informs us, that the doctrine of predestination 'Teaches a 'particular absolute decree to save some special persons, irresistibly, 'all other persons being by a no less absolute decree rejected.' And when those who are thus rejected, refuse to receive a promise of mercy, which could only tend to deceive them, we do not see how it can increase their guilt. Be that as it may, the decree of heaven has not left it to their choice, whether they will receive it or not, it has rendered their rejection of it unavoidable, they cannot act otherwise whatever guilt they may contract.

When men receive the promises, our author affirms, without a fear of contradiction, *that it is entirely from the grace of God.* Yet, we think this requires some explanation: we may come in contact with this subject again, but it requires some notice here; and a calvinist will be glad that we have the temerity to demur at what is here stated. There is no point they are more ready to defend, nor any which they enter upon with more confidence of success; and if they cannot stand their ground here, they cannot do it any where else. It is a point which has been too often conceded to them; and when this is done, it is in vain to dispute any thing else which they advance. That it is all of grace when men receive the gospel message, we think is true in one sense, and not in another; that to make such a declaration, under some circumstances, would be very proper and beneficial; but in other cases, highly improper and injurious. The text here brought forward, *In me is thy help,* does not prove the point. The help afforded, however adequate and gratuitous, does not prove that man has no duty to perform: it rather supposes the contrary. And if man has any thing to do in the reception of the gospel message, then it is not

true in every sense of the word, that it is entirely of grace. And if it be only true in one sense and not in another, both sides ought to be stated to prevent mistakes. When only one side of a subject is stated, even the truth that is told may have all the effect of the most pernicious falsehood. When it is affirmed, that the reception of the gospel message is entirely of grace, it may be either a precious truth, or a vile perversion of it, according to the manner in which it is employed.

If man has no part to act in the reception of the gospel, he can have nothing to do in any other religious department. And if man has nothing to do, he never neglects his duty; and if he be not saved, the failure is in divine grace. If man has nothing to do, why does Mr. B. himself so often urge us to the performance of our Christian duty? He says, 'Let us *cease* from every vain hope, 'and attend to the divine admonition, Isa. xxviii. 16. Be not con-'tent to hear, read, and speak of Christ, but *build* on him. If we 'would not build in vain, if we would not have our toil lost, if we 'would obtain a full reward, let us take heed that we build what 'will stand the test of trial by fire. Above all, the Bible read with 'prayer, with fervent persevering prayer. The Bible is the most 'holy book in the world: however particular passages may have 'been perverted, nothing can be further from Antinomianism as a 'whole. Nothing has any pretence to the claims of scriptural 'divinity, which consists with the allowed indulgence of one evil 'thought. You may observe in every part of the Bible the utmost 'freedom in insisting on duties, without any fear of thereby weak-'ening doctrines which might have the appearance of an opposing 'view. Men are in all cases called, if they would not perish, to 'give up their sins and turn to God. The habit of dependence 'on the Spirit for the increase and preservation of our faith, must 'ever be combined with a diligent improvement of all means con-'ducive to their most important ends.' Of this we most cordially approve. And it shows that man has a part to act in the concerns of his salvation; and if he does not leave his sins and turn to God, he must perish. Hence, when we say that man is saved entirely by grace, to prevent being misunderstood, it ought to be added, that man has a part to act, without which he cannot obtain salvation. The scripture proceeds on this principle when it says, Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near. Strive to enter in at the straight gate. Ask, and it shall be given. Knock, and the door shall be opened. It is true, that these things cannot be done without the assistance of divine grace; and it is equally true, that the grace of God will not do them for us. Consequently, when we only say that the reception of the gospel is entirely of grace, we do not state the whole truth, and by this means we may lead people into fatal mistakes. There may be occasions when it is only needful to speak of the work of grace; but are there not cases in which men ought to be told, that their salvation *entirely* depends upon themselves?

We may suppose that a person of great wealth and beneficence is

about to sail from a port on the Barbary coast; and is attended by a number of slaves belonging to a man in the country; and before he embarks he kindly puts a purse into each of their hands, sufficient to pay their ransom; and says, take this, and pay it into the hands of your master, and you will from that moment be free. Some of them do as they are directed, and obtain their freedom: others spend their money on the gratification of their passions, and remain in bondage. And when you are speaking of those who were liberated, you very properly say it was entirely an act of grace. But it is equally proper to add, that unless they had acted better than some of their comrades, all the grace they received would not have made them free; as appears by those who still remain in bondage, though they received the same grace.

We may further suppose, that you see those slaves after the price of their ransom has been put into their hands; and knowing them to be surrounded with allurements to vice, and to have a strong propensity to indulge their passions in a way that would detain them in servitude, you direct your discourse to them with a design to promote their welfare. And in doing this, it may be very proper to extol the bounty of their benefactor, and speak of the riches of his grace. Yet it may be equally needful to urge them not to receive that grace in vain; and to show the absolute necessity of their applying the money which has been given to them, according to the intention and direction of the donor. In some cases it may be more needful to speak of the grace that is given them, and in other cases it may be more requisite to press them to the performance of their own duty, without which they cannot be free.

Some of them may be of opinion, that what has been given is not adequate to pay their ransom; that they must add something of their own, to make it complete. Others of them may not be willing to owe their deliverance to another person, but are wishful to have the merit of it themselves, either in whole or in part. Then you will see it to be your duty to expose their vain, impious, and dangerous notions, and to tell them that the ransom is already complete, and if it were not so, they could not supply the deficiency; that their liberation is to be all of grace, not of works, lest any man should boast. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. This is infallible truth; but it is not the whole truth, nor is it intended to be taken for the whole; and if it be improperly applied, it may prove extremely dangerous. There are other circumstances when another and a very different part of the truth should be brought forward. You find some of the slaves disposed to spend the money they have received on their present gratifications: and when you exhort them to obey the directions which had been given them, in order that they might obtain their liberty, they reply that they are to be saved entirely by grace; that were they to do any thing

to obtain a release, it would be by their own works; and it would rob their benefactor of all his honour. And they point you to their former companions, who were all liberated entirely by grace, and they expect in due time the same grace will franchise them. To these you ought to say, O, generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Recover yourselves out of the snare of the devil. The ransom money has been put into your hands, and now your liberation depends entirely upon yourselves. If you do not do your duty, you may talk about grace till you lose all the grace that has been given; and you may have to say, the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. The opportunity is put into your hands, therefore save yourselves. You say your companions were liberated by grace: very true, in one sense they were, for the whole of their ransom money was given them gratuitously; but if they had spent it any other way, and had not paid it into the hands of their master, they would have been in bondage still; and if you do not imitate their example, you will have to drag your chains all your days. The notion that doing your duty, in order to be free, will rob your benefactor of his honour, is extremely whimsical, but not the less dangerous on that account. The honour he requires in the first place, is to be believed and obeyed; and when you have paid the money as he directed you, then you will be free, and the merit of it will belong to him; and you will say, not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory. But as I have before told you, that as the ransom money has been put into your hands, nothing can now save you but your own exertions. Therefore work out your own salvation. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls. What doth it profit, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Hence we see, that when the grace of God is proclaimed, men are to be told that if they did not make a proper use of that grace, it will not answer the purpose. When the mercy of God is offered, there are terms to be complied with on the part of those who receive it; which none can do but themselves. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, and he will abundantly pardon.

You may say that you feel some reluctance to state the whole truth, for when you speak of the promises being received, if you do not maintain it is entirely of grace, in every sense of the word, you will not be esteemed evangelical, not a preacher of free grace: you will be called legalist and merit-monger; and it will be said that you preach salvation by works: that you trample on the Saviour's crown and dignity, and go about to establish a righteousness of your own. You may say, that Beveridge will blast your reputation with his *Private Thoughts;* Hervey, with his *Dialogues;*

Romaine, with his *Walk of Faith;* T. Scott, with his *Force of Truth,* (falsely so called;) and Whitfield will say that you know no more of the gospel than Mahomet. We reply, that we admit of all this: but yet say never regard these 'Antinomian dotages.' While you have the word of the Lord, preach it faithfully; and then you will be useful in your day and generation, you will have the testimony of a good conscience, the blessing of them that were ready to perish will come upon you; and at last you will hear the Saviour say, Well done, good and faithful servant.

Our author affirms, that the truths of the gospel are to induce us to unite in seeking to save our own souls, and the souls of our fellow-creatures. But if the work be entirely of grace, in every sense of the word, where is the need of our own exertions? and upon what are they to be employed? What we should most of all wish to know, is, whose souls are we to seek to save,—those of the elect or those of the reprobate? If the eternal destiny of both these classes of mankind be irrevocably fixed before they come into the world, what can be the use of seeking to save either the one or the other? All our labours, tears, and groans, however exerted, could not save one of the reprobates; and it may be supposed, that the souls of the elect are safe enough already.

Our author seems willing to get rid of reprobation, if he could do this and still retain his favourite election; he says, 'On reprobation, 'as the supposed opposite and deduction from predestination, we 'have nothing to offer but our own ignorance, where scripture has 'not made things clear. We speak of the supposed opposite; it is 'in reality merely supposed; the real opposite to elect in scripture 'is not reprobate, but the world, the rest.' —— He grants here that there are *real opposites* to the elect, and his own description of the elect, when quoting Bishop Hall is as follows: 'God hath willed 'and decreed to give special grace, to those who are predestinate, 'that they may be saved. It is not the pre-vision of faith or any 'act of man, whereupon the decree of God is founded, but the plea-'sure of God appointing to save those whom he hath chosen in 'Christ. And this decree is absolute, unchangeable, and from ever-'lasting.' Now, the real opposites of these are the other part of mankind, who are eternally, absolutely, and unchangeably left to perish. What can they be but reprobates? They may be called the world, and the rest; but giving them these softer names cannot improve their condition. As the elect only are to be saved, all the rest are left for destruction. On this point, Calvin says, 'But you are greatly deceived, if you think that the eternal coun-'cils of God can be so separated, that he elected some men to 'salvation, and destined no one to destruction. For if he elected '*some*, it certainly follows that all are not elected. What shall we 'say of these latter? except that they are left to themselves to 'perish.' Calvin makes the reprobates, the real opposites of the elect. As the decree of election was not founded on any foreseen faith or obedience, so the decree of reprobation was not founded on any thing foreseen in the conduct of men. He says, 'That frivolous

'subterfuge of the schoolmen, concerning prescience, falls to the 'ground. For Paul does not assert, that the destruction of the 'ungodly was foreseen by the Lord, but that it was ordained by his 'council and will. Our minds should be content that it so seemed 'good to God to illuminate some men to salvation, and to blind 'others to death. The reprobates are addicted to this wickedness, 'because they are raised up by the just but inscrutable judgment 'of God, to illustrate his glory by their damnation.'

Our author, we admit, is at liberty to depart from the sentiments of Calvin whenever he pleases, but he may be assured that Calvinstic election cannot stand without reprobation.

Our author proceeds to say, 'The term reprobate is not used with 'reference to the final condition of mankind in eternity, but with 'reference to disapprobation either of God or man in time, so that 'a sinner may, by his open wickedness, be manifestly reprobate in 'the scriptural meaning of the word, and yet afterwards, by his 'conversion to God, be manifested to be one of his children.' All this is true, and might be easily proved from the scriptures. The Gentile nations, for instance, because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, were given up to a reprobate mind; but when afterwards they came to embrace the gospel, the very persons who had been reprobates before, then became God's elect. But what hindered our author from seeing, that the term elect is used in scripture in a similar manner, not in reference to men's condition in eternity, but to denote their special privileges and approval in time? So that a person who is one of God's elect, may, by turning away from his righteousness, become one of the reprobate. The scriptural meaning of the word elect, is the hinge on which the Calvinistic controversy turns; and surely we should labour to obtain the right meaning of one word, when so much depends on its proper explanation. Whoever reads the scriptures without prejudice, will find that the word elect denotes persons appointed to some particular office; and likewise such as are favoured with special religious privileges, and those also who, by a proper use of their religious privileges, are made holy in heart and life. But an unconditional appointment of any person to eternal life, is what the term never signifies in any part of God's word. For the election which the scripture speaks of, is a privilege that might be forfeited; hence those who were favoured with it, were to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. The whole Jewish nation were God's elect people, whether they were saints or sinners: even those were the elect, of whom God sware in his wrath that they should not enter his rest. When those very persons who had been God's elect rejected the gospel, they became reprobates. Those among the Jews who believed in Christ, became subjects of a new election, called the election of grace; because it included the privileges of the gospel, which is a dispensation of grace. All who professed the Christian faith, were, in the language of the apostles, God's elect people; but this could not signify their absolute appointment to eternal life, for the apostacy of some of them was predicted.

Our Saviour compares the gospel kingdom to a field, in which tares grow among the wheat until the harvest: he compares it to a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind: which when it was full, they drew to the shore, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. But notwithstanding this mixture in the gospel kindom, they were all called God's elect people. And those who had obtained the election of grace, might fall away and become reprobates. Hence the apostle says, If some of the branches were broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among (for) them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches——because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith, be not high-minded but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee;—otherwise thou shalt be cut off. St. Paul was one of God's elect; yet he says, I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest after I have preached to others, I should myself become reprobate. When the Jews were cast off from being God's church and people, and consequently had lost their election, they were not consigned to inevitable destruction; for by repentance and faith, they might still obtain mercy. Hence the apostle says, and they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. His heart's desire and prayer to God was, that they might be saved. He says, I magnify mine office; if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are of my flesh, and might save some of them. And it must be evident to every unprejudiced mind, that if the apostle had been of opinion that the election of grace had made eternal life certain, he could not have spoken of those who were thus elected being afterwards cast off: and if he thought that such as were excluded from this election, could never enter the kingdom of heaven, he would not have prayed and laboured so much for their salvation. Therefore Calvinistic election is what never entered the apostle's mind, as the whole tenor of his writings abundantly testify. Let those who contend that election signifies an unconditional appointment of any person to eternal life, produce the passage, where any inspired writer has ever used the word in that signification. If they will do this, we shall grant them every thing else they contend for; if they cannot do this, why do they continue to defend such an unscriptural notion?

The pious, learned, and judicious Doddridge, strongly maintained Calvinistic election to be the doctrine of the scriptures; yet he was greatly at a loss to find in what part of the scripture it was contained. When he set himself, with all his might, to make the scriptures speak the sentiments of Calvin, he was baffled and confounded: and had often the candour to acknowledge, that the notion of election contended for, was not to be found in the passage under consideration: at the same time, he was anxious to believe himself, and to have it believed by others, that such a notion was supported in some other part of scripture, though he could not positively say where.

On 1 Pet. ii. 9, *Ye are a chosen generation,*—he says, 'Dr. 'Whitby shows at large that the phrase of God's chosen, is applied 'to the whole nation of the Jews, good and bad, and not to those 'among them who might be supposed elected to eternal life. But 'it seems very unreasonable to limit such phrases as these, when 'applied to Christians, just to the idea which the like phrases had 'when applied to the Jews.' In reply, we may observe, that the writer here mentioned did not limit these phrases when applied to Christians, just to the idea they had among the Jews; but admitted they had reference to a better covenant: but with this exception, we can see no unreasonableness in the apostle's using the phrases God's elect, and chosen people, in the same sense, in which the people to whom they were writing, had been accustomed to hear them used. But for the writers of the New Testament, to use those phrases in a sense totally different, to that in which they are used in the Old Testament, would have been very unreasonable; if they either desired or expected to be understood. The Calvinistic sense of these phrases is totally different, to what they had in the writings of Moses and the prophets. The election of the Jews showed them to be a people highly favoured of the Lord: but it left them in a state of probation, and they might fall by disobedience. It did not exclude others from salvation: the Almighty did not leave himself without witness among the Gentiles, and in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. And others might obtain the benefits of Jewish election, by becoming proselytes to their religion. But Calvinistic election supposes 'an absolute decree to save some special persons, for 'whom only Christ was given, and to whom grace is given, irre-'sistibly, all others being by a no less absolute decree rejected.' So that the number of the elect, can neither be increased nor diminished; and all others are left to perish. That the apostles would so totally change the signification of common Jewish phrases, without any explanation, is what we see no reason to believe.

On Eph. i. 4, *Hath chosen us in him*—Doddridge says, 'I think 'the apostle here cannot be understood to intimate that every one 'of the persons who belonged to the Church of the Ephesians, was 'by a particular decree of God personally chosen to eternal life. 'For he could have no evidence that this was the case, without 'such a revelation as I think none have pretended, and as would 'very ill agree with other passsages relating to the apostacy of 'some who once made a forward profession, and with the many 'exhortations and cautions which every where occur in his 'writings.'

In the ninth of Romans we read of what happened to Jacob and Esau, that the purpose of God according to election might stand; which Doddridge paraphrases as follows: 'In the case of 'Rebecca, it was said to her, that two different people should pro-'ceed from the birth then approaching, and that the elder of them, 'that is, the posterity of Esau, should serve the the descendants of 'Jacob. As it is written, (Mal. i. 2, 3,) I have loved Jacob and

'hated Esau, that is, I have greatly preferred the former to the 'latter, bestowing many peculiar privileges and favours upon the 'posterity of Jacob which I have denied to that of Esau; whose 'habitation I have laid waste for the dragons of the wilderness, 'while that of his brother flourished in the richest abundance.'

In a note he says, '*Greatly preferred the former to the latter*— 'That to love and hate have this sense in scripture, is evident, 'compare Gen. xxix. 31; Luke xiv. 26; John xii. 25. It is cer- 'tain the apostle does not here speak of the eternal state of Jacob 'and Esau, nor does he indeed speak so much of their persons as 'of their posterity; since it is plainly to that posterity that both 'the prophecies which he quotes in support of his argument refer. 'His laying waste the heritage of the Edomites for the dragons of 'the wilderness, is so different a thing from his appointing the 'person of Esau to eternal misery by a mere act of sovereignty, 'without regard to any thing done or to be done by him to deserve 'it, that I will rather submit to any censure from my fellow- 'servants, than deal so freely with my Maker as to conclude the 'one from the other.'

We see here, that this commentator had the boldness to vindicate the truth, against those who suppose, that the Almighty was graciously pleased to tell Rebecca, that she should bring forth two sons, that should be the fathers of two nations: but that her eldest son, before he was born, was doomed to eternal fire; and all his offspring likewise: and not for any good or evil they might do; but merely that his own purpose, according to election, might stand. It appears that in this place he gives up Calvinistic election: and if he gives it up here, it is in vain for him to search for it any where else.

Mr. B. himself frequently speaks as if he were of our opinion on the subject before us; he says, 'There is one sentiment especially 'awakening, that the present delay of punishment as to the wicked, 'is only in the result to show his wrath and make his power 'known. O let us without delay flee from the wrath to come.' But supposing men to be elected as he understands the word, what wrath have such to flee from? and what wrath can others escape? As to fleeing without *delay*, we have to ask, whether men can leave their sins a moment sooner or later than the appointed time? He tells us, in a quotation from Bishop Hall, that 'God has decreed 'to give a special and effectual grace to those that are predestinate, 'whereby they shall believe and not be wanting to his Spirit, in 'whatsoever shall be necessary to their salvation.' And if so, we cannot be reasonably desired to flee till this grace be given, nor expected to make any delay afterwards. He further remarks, that, 'Our own obedience is another rock of false confidence, on which 'millions have built to their everlasting ruin.' The question here is, Do any of the elect do this? or, can the reprobates do any thing better? If men's destiny be fixed before they come into the world, how it is that it afterwards depends upon their own conduct, is what we have not seen explained.

It may be asked, why we ply Mr. B. with reprobation, as he professes not to hold that sentiment? We reply, that he maintains such a notion of election, as inevitably draws reprobation in its train. And he sometimes openly vindicates reprobation, whether intentionally or not is his own concern. 'A late dignitary of our 'Church,' he says, 'while commending our own Reformers, says,' "the foreign ones, Zuinglius, Calvin, and Luther were men of "more zeal than judgment. The very expression, good works, "conveyed so unchristian a sound in their ears, that in guarding "against it, they thought the doctrine of the divine agency could "not be carried too far. In their pious zeal for the honour of God, "they established a system of nonsense."—'To describe their sen-'timents,' he says, 'even on the divine decrees, as a system of non-'sense, appears to the author but exemplifying the words of the 'apostle: the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of 'God, for they are foolishness unto him.'

It is here to be observed, that our author could not think these words of the apostle exemplified in those who reject the decrees, unless he thought the decrees were the things of the Spirit of God: consequently, he here avows these decrees to be a part of his own creed. Let us hear what those decrees are. On this subject, the divines of the synod of Dort state, 'That God, by an absolute 'decree, hath elected to salvation, a small number of men, without 'any regard to their faith or obedience whatsoever; and secluded 'from saving grace all the rest of mankind, and appointed them by 'the same decree to eternal damnation, without any regard to their 'infidelity or impenitency.' Calvin speaks on this subject as follows: 'Impious persons object, that men are exempt from guilt, if 'the will of God has the principal part in their salvation or dam-'nation. Does Paul deny it? Nay, by his answer, he confirms 'that God appointed what seemed good to him concerning men; 'that nevertheless, men in vain and furiously rise up to quarrel, 'because God of his own right assigns to his creatures what lot he 'wills.'—'Paul, therefore, meant to signify, that the elect are the 'instruments or organs, by which God exercises his mercy, that he 'might glorify his mercy in them. But although in this second 'member he more expressly asserts, that it is God who prepares 'his elect for glory, when before he had simply said, that the 'reprobates are vessels prepared for destruction; yet there is no 'doubt but that both preparations depend upon the secret counsel 'of God. Otherwise Paul would have said that the reprobates 'gave themselves up, or cast themselves into destruction. But now 'he signifies that they are already assigned to their lot, before they 'are born.'—In Rom. ix. 20, 23.

Such are the decrees which Mr. B. undertakes to vindicate from a charge of nonsense, and states it as his opinion, that all who make such a charge, are those natural men, who receive not the things of the Spirit of God: which is as much as to say, that they have a carnal mind at enmity with God; as unfit for heaven as the vilest pagans and infidels: which in our opinion might be taken as an

exemplification of the apostle's words, where he speaks of a man having all faith and not having charity.

After he has dealt so heavy a blow, on those who differ from him in opinion, we might expect according to his usual mode, another lecture on that brotherly kindness, which Christians of all denominations ought to cultivate towards each other: but we were not led to expect that Calvin himself, would be selected out of the whole religious world, as a pattern of kindness, meekness, and forbearance: yet so it is! for our author proceeds to say, 'We forget that the 'spirit of Christian love wins far more than the keenness and 'acuteness of polemics. But let us fear lest we bring disputations, 'disunions, and bitterness among fellow Christians, and ruin millions 'of immortal souls, by seeking ourselves, under the vain pretence of 'seeking God and his glory.'——'How beautiful on the other hand, 'is that spirit which returns kindness for unkindness, and instead of 'railing gives a blessing. Thus did Calvin, in a letter to Bullinger, 'highly commending Luther, who had abused him. He says, I am 'often accustomed to say that if he should call me devil, yet I will 'still honour and acknowledge him as an eminent servant of God.'* This, it must be acknowledged is well said: but does not Calvin sometimes come before us in another character, or under a different aspect? It affords us no pleasure to mention the case of Michael Servetus, but it is too well known to be concealed. The records of those times inform us, that Servetus was accused of heresy, in a place where the supposed crime subjected a man to be burnt alive. When he was in gaol, his enemies treated him with as much rigour, as if he had been in the Inquisition. They took from him ninety-seven pieces of gold, a gold chain, and his gold rings, and put him into a deep dungeon, where he was almost devoured with vermin; and he was only brought forth to be burnt at a stake. All this cruelty and injustice was practised in the city of Geneva; and at the instigation of Calvin: which caused a certain writer to affirm, that if he did not repent of this transaction, he could not be eternally saved. This is not our opinion; for if he could not be saved without he repented of this transaction, we fear he would have to be left among his own reprobates, who, he says, are so 'cursed of 'God, that they can call forth and accumulate nothing, but curse, 'by all their deeds, words, and counsels.' We excuse Calvin on the ground of his insanity: that such was his state of mind, is our cool, deliberate, and decided judgment. Others may receive or reject this opinion as they please: there is nothing depending upon it in the way of argument. To suppose that his mind was in this state, is no disparagement to his moral character. Some of the greatest and best of men have been subject to this malady. Men of the brightest intellects, may be more subject to it than others. The very worthy and learned Cruden was often insane; and might be so, when he wrote his excellent Concordance. Men in this state, sometimes possess a very acute and penetrating judgment,

* We believe our author is here under a mistake: that these words were not spoken by Calvin, but by Melancthon.

and can reason in a masterly manner on any subject but one; and even on that point, they draw proper conclusions from false premises. The subject on which we suppose Calvin's mind to have been unhinged, is what he calls the divine decrees. The following, from his comment on Rom. xi. 7, may be taken as a specimen. He says, 'As the elect alone are, by the grace of God, delivered 'from destruction, so whoever is not elected, must remain blinded. 'For this Paul means, as far as regards the reprobate, that the be-'ginning of their ruin and damnation is from hence, that they 'are abandoned of God. The testimonies he adduces, although 'they are collected from various passages of scripture, rather than 'taken from one place, yet seem all foreign to his purpose, if you 'more clearly examine them according to their circumstances. 'For you will every where see, that the blinding and hardening are 'mentioned as scourges of God, by which he avenges the sins 'already committed by the ungodly. But Paul here strives to 'prove, that they are blinded, not only who have already de-'served it by their wickedness, but who were reprobated by God 'before the foundation of the world. Wherefore Paul, not with-'out reason, has cited these things concerning eternal reprobation, 'which proceed from it, as fruit from its tree, a river from its 'source.'

Here Calvin gives his opinion freely, and lets us know that Paul and the prophets wrote in direct contradiction to each other. According to the prophets, it were the crimes of men, which brought forth the decrees of heaven to punish them; but according to Paul, it was the previous decree of heaven which produced men's crimes. The *beginning* of their ruin and damnation was from God: all their blinding and hardening which comes upon them in time, and the punishment which will overtake them hereafter, originated in the decree of reprobation, which was made before the creation of the world. In this manner, our inspired apostle, is made to contradict those holy men of old, who wrote and spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The truth, in this case can only be on one side or the other; but we are of course to believe that which appears most unreasonable and incredible. All the testimonies which are adduced from scripture, maintain the blinding and hardening to be scourges of God, to punish sins already committed; which is reasonable and just: but as the apostle labours to prove the reverse of all this, we are consequently to receive his opinion into our creed; and not only be slow of heart to believe what the prophets have said, but are actually to believe that they are false witnesses of God, because they testified that men's sins were the cause of their punishment; instead of saying that men's crimes begin in their reprobation, and proceed as naturally from it, as fruit from a tree, or a river from its source. The apostle is very unfortunate in the testimonies he adduces from scripture, though they are collected from various sources, they are all foreign to his purpose; not a single testimony answers his design: they not only fail to support the argument he has in hand,

but when they come to be more closely examined, they unquestionably prove the very reverse: and opposed as he is to the prophets, he does not appear to more advantage when he stands alone; for he contradicts himself as much as he does the prophets. He states, as we are told, that the unbelieving Jews of his day, were eternally and irrevocably doomed to destruction, before they came into the world; and in the very place where he makes this statement, he says he is labouring to save them, he points them to a Saviour, and prays for their salvation. Under the infamy of these contradictions he must remain, so long as Calvin's comment is supported.

The above quotation from Calvin, is an epitome of his system, and taking it for all in all, where shall we 'look upon its like again?' 'We might venture to back it against any piece of equal length, that ever issued from the walls of Bedlam?' It is not proper to call this a system of nonsense, it is a system of madness; and we charitably hope that the author of it was insane. If Mr. B. will not admit this, on what ground will he vindicate his conduct towards Servetus?

We have further to state, that Castellio was eminent for piety and learning, and Calvin recomended him to the pastoral office; but they afterwards differed in their opinion on predestination. On this account, Calvin in his writings calls him 'heretic, blasphemer, 'reviler, full of ignorance and impudence; impostor, a base cor-'ruptor of the sacred writings, a mocker of God, a contemner of all 'religion, a filthy dog, a knave, an impious, crooked-minded vaga-'bond, and a beggarly rogue.' Such was the language of a man, who is now held up to our view as a pattern of all that is kind, meek, and forbearing.

Our author brings us into a better atmosphere, by introducing the late Rev. Robert Hall; who commends the clergy of this day in reference to predestination and free will; 'On which' says Hall, 'equally remote from Pelagian heresy and Antinomian licentiousness, 'they freely tolerate and indulge a diversity of opinion, embracing 'Calvinists and Arminians without distinction; provided the Cal-'vinism of the former be practical and moderate, and the Arminianism 'of the latter be evangelical and devout. The greater part of 'them lean, we believe, to the doctrine of general redemption, and 'love to represent the gospel as bearing a friendly aspect towards 'the eternal happiness of all to whom it is addressed; but they are 'much less anxious to establish a polemical accuracy than to win 'souls to Christ.'

We have admired and esteemed R. Hall, for the amiableness of his disposition and the splendour of his talents; yet we think there is something here, more specious than substantial, more likely to mislead than to inform the judgment. Whether Arminianism, if not true, can be evangelical, we shall leave others to determine: but we should wish to know in what sense Calvinism can be either practical or moderate. Of its moderation we can form no idea: a man professing this doctrine may be moderate; he may make a moderate use of it; he may preach or write in general as if he did not hold this doctrine; but the moderation of the man, can with

no propriety be transferred to the doctrine, which must come up to a certain standard, or it ceases to answer its designation. By some divines, this doctrine is expressed as follows: 'There is predetermined a certain number of the predestinate, which can neither be 'augmented nor diminished.' And is not this necessarily included in every form in which the doctrine can be presented? No person of this persuasion can take his stand on lower ground, without deserting his ranks; and no person can ascend any higher. He may, indeed, branch out into various explanations, and show that whatever determines the number of the elect, equally fixes that of the reprobates: so that it is impossible either for one of the elect to be lost, or for one of the reprobates to be saved. He may state that no piety can save the reprobate; nor any wickedness keep the elect out of heaven: but this is not taking any higher ground; it is only explaining that which he, and every one else sets out upon, who embraces this doctrine.

Calvin, in a letter to Melancthon, says, 'Nothing is more generally known, than that the preaching of the word is promiscuously 'common to all, but that the spirit of faith, is, by a singular privilege, given to the elect alone.' There can be no Calvinist in the world who does not believe this, and what more on this subject can any one believe? If faith be given only to the elect, the elect only can be saved. If faith be given to them as a singular privilege, it is not given for any thing they have done or can do; and it will not be finally taken from them, whatever sin they may commit: and no Antinomian can go higher than this. Therefore, there is no such thing in existence as moderate Calvinism: those who suppose it are under a deception.

The next enquiry is, whether Calvinism can be truly said to be practical? A Calvinist may be practical, though his doctrine may be the reverse. Doctrines are, indeed, trees bearing fruit after their kind; but a tree in some ground does not bear fruit: yet if the same tree had been planted in a congenial soil, it would have been fruitful. Some persons have believed in a communion of goods, who never put forth their hands to their neighbour's property; but if such an opinion were to become general, it would produce its direful effects. An avowed Antinomian may walk as becometh the gospel; but if his opinions were to be embraced by the multitude, it would bring forth the fruit of Sodom, and clusters of Gomorrah. In what way Calvinism can be supposed to have a practical tendency, we cannot conjecture; and should feel obliged to any person who should undertake to give an explantion; and would allow him all the latitude, in the choice of topics, he could reasonably desire. He should not be confined to the following words of Calvin:—'It 'is true, that their own sins, under the direction of God's provi-'dence, are so far from injuring the saints, that they rather promote 'their salvation.' Such a person should not be confined to the following article of the synod of Dort. 'That God by an absolute 'decree, hath elected to salvation a number of men, without any 'regard to their faith or obedience whatsoever: that all who have

'once received that grace by faith, can never fall from it finally or 'totally, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit.' A person wishing to prove, that this doctrine has a practical tendency, should not be confined to what those maintain, who assert, that Christ's active obedience is so imputed to the elect, that God can see no sin in them, whatever their conduct may be. We would not confine such a person to Mason's notes on the *Pilgrim's Progress*, who says, 'The slothfulness, ease, and desires of the 'flesh must be denied, or danger will inevitably ensue. To gratify 'the flesh is to destroy the spirit's comfort, though not the soul's 'salvation.' But we should suppose, that to persuade a man under the influence of temptation, that no indulgence of the flesh can endanger his salvation, is not the way that God has found out for his escape; but the most effectual method of causing him to fall into the snare of the wicked one. Therefore, when beset with temptation, let a man remember, that he who committeth sin is of the devil: that if ye fulfil the lusts of the flesh, ye shall die.

A person endeavouring to prove the practical tendency of the doctrine in question, should not be confined to the notes in the Bishops' Bible, which Mr. B. speaks of with great applause, and gives a copious selection of them for the edification of young students. The drift of these notes is to show, that all the exhortations and admonitions in scripture, are superseded by the privileges of the elect; so that their acceptance does not, in any sense of the word, depend on their own conduct, but on that Being, who not only begins but finishes their salvation. On these words, *Lest I should be a cast away*, the note is, 'Lest he should be reproved 'of men.' On these words, *Make your election sure*, the note is, 'Albeit it be sure in itself, forasmuch as God cannot change.'

Our author does not 'justify each annotation as the exposition of 'the passage;' which is an admission that the sense of scripture is not given in these notes: but he seems to think they give something much better, while they give the sense of his favourite divines. Those annotations which give the sense of scripture, are low, dull, legal stuff, compared with that high-toned divinity, which contradicts the scripture to support Calvinism. But commentators which are to our author's taste, have their own difficulties, for he says, 'T. Scott 'was thrown among Antinomians, and was fully alive to all the danger 'of their pestilent errors.' More truly it might have been said, that his preaching and writing produced Antinomianism in the surrounding neighbourhood, as might have been expected: and he was so little aware of the danger of those tenets, that he published that compound of prejudice and folly, called the *Force of Truth;* in which all these errors are supported, and set off with the most splendid decorations. It seems that our author admits that Antinomians hold pestilent errors: but he cannot point out one of those errors, which is not to be found in the notes which he has selected from the Bishops' Bible, and recommended to the study and imitation of his students.

He says, 'Admitting that there is a tendency in our corrupt

'hearts to abuse the doctrine of our free salvation; yet that doctrine 'must not therefore be indistinctly stated, for it alone is the power 'of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' It will indeed be granted, that a tendency in our hearts to abuse a doctrine, is no reason why it should not be distinctly stated; but what he seems to forget, is, that this is the case with every doctrine, whether it relate to privilege or duty: and he forgets, likewise, that the apostle was not speaking of the peculiar doctrines of election, but of the whole gospel, when he said, It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: and this gospel he termed the grace of God, which teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world. But a substitute is found for these duties in those notes of the Bible, with which our author is so much delighted.

We are yet at a loss to know, how the doctrine in question can with any truth or reason be said to be practical. You say it is because men are elected to holiness; but then, you likewise affirm, that men were not elected for their holiness, and none of them will be rejected whatever sin they may commit. Hence, a person may say, if I am one of the elect, no sin will prevent my salvation; and if I am not elected from eternity, no obedience will save me from destruction. You further say, that election produces holiness: we know this is said, but we wish it to be proved. You admit election does not keep men out of the grossest crimes; that by adultery and murder they do not forfeit their title to heaven; that they may continue in the vilest wickedness till the close of life, and give no evidence of a change till they come to make their last dying speech and confession. Little as we depend upon a late repentance, we do not deny the possibility of it; but if such persons were elected to heaven before they came into the world, it shows that election has very little to do with a holy life.

It is moreover stated, that the elect love God and hate sin; which induces them to walk in holiness. Our preceding remarks apply to this statement; and we further say, that when men love God and hate sin, it is the fruit of regenerating grace, which is not confined to those who believe in election; and consequently this is no proof that the belief of election produces holiness of life.

It is further pleaded, that he who appointed the end, has appointed the means. So it is easily said, but in what sense is this to be understood? Are acts of righteouness the means appointed? and if so, can we neglect them, or can we not? If we can neglect them with impunity, then the appointment does not secure holiness. If it be said we cannot neglect them; the point is assumed which ought to be proved. But waving this want of proof, we say, if the appointment of the means cannot be frustrated, the observance of them is not our concern, but the result of an uncontrolable power, which makes our attendance on the means, no more a moral practice, than our motion through the regions of space by the revolution of the earth. And if the appointment of the means cannot be neglected, then this appointment is consistent with all the sins we

have already committed; and with all we may hereafter commit. You moreover plead, that if we do not walk in holiness, we shall lose the comforts of the spirit: but if the appointment of the means cannot be frustrated, we must have done what we were appointed to do: and can have lost none of the comforts of the spirit by our own conduct; nor can we do this for the time to come. But granting that disobedience would lose the comforts of the spirit, but not endanger our salvation, experience lamentably proves, how little this consideration avails in the time of powerful temptation. So that we can yet find nothing practical in Calvinism.

But you insist, that a Calvinist may preach as practically as any other minister. This will be granted, but at such times he is inconsistent with his favourite system; and when he brings forward his peculiar tenets, all his practical arguments are counteracted and overthrown: he may very powerfully enforce gospel obedience; but when he comes to state, that salvation is unconditional, all his practical motives make themselves wings and fly away.

You still maintain, that the doctrine under consideration, cannot encourage men to live without holiness, because no individual knows that he is elected. That this is not known will be granted; but you tell them they are individually either elect or reprobate; and as they are, they alwaays have been, and must so remain: for no obedience can prevent the destruction of the reprobate, nor any disobedience cause the elect to perish. And how such a doctrine can be practical is utterly inconceivable.

By way of illustration, it may be said, a number of farmers wish to know what their future crops will be: and you open the book of fate, and show them the land they occupy will yield a certain quantity of corn, and not a grain more can be produced whatever they may do, nor a grain less whatever they may leave undone. Some of them will have good crops, and others bad ones; but over these circumstances they have no control; for both the quality and quantity of the produce is fixed by fate, without any regard to their own exertions. If after they know this they continue industrious, it must be from some motive which the doctrine of fate does not furnish. They may be urged to diligence because it will keep them out of mischief, promote their health, and show their gratitude to that power which causes the land to yield its increase: but such arguments would have little weight with some farmers, while they knew their own endeavours would make no difference in the produce of the soil. But whether these arguments would avail or not, they do not arise out of the doctrine of fate, and it is that which we say is not practical. It may be pleaded that the motive of gratitude arises out of this scheme, because the increase is made to depend not on their own industry, but on a higher power: the meaning of which is, that an exemption from an obligation to labour, will furnish a motive for labour. Supposing it should be so understood, gratitude is only one spring of action in the human heart, and it cannot always be moved by this alone. Besides, how is gratitude

to be produced by the scheme, when no individual can know whether he is to have a good crop or a bad one?

With these farmers, let another method be tried. Let them be told, that the book of fate which they have heard read, is a false and pernicious publication, which should not have escaped the fire at Ephesus, Acts xix. 19; so that they must discard it altogether, and remember that the Almighty Disposer of events, has appointed man to eat his bread with the sweat of his brow. They are to know that all their labour would be fruitless without the divine blessing, but that this blessing will be given; so that their labour will not be in vain. Yet those who labour little, will reap little, and those who labour much, shall have an abundant increase. For the hand of the diligent maketh rich: but he that will not plough by reason of the cold, shall beg in the harvest and have nothing. And when they come to know, that the divine blessing will crown their labours with certain and abundant success, they will have more cause for gratitude than upon the other scheme, which spoke indeed of a highly favoured class, but could not distinguish any individual belonging thereunto. And besides gratitude, they will have every other motive to labour which is proper to influence human nature: hence when fate is discarded, we can have a practical scheme; but not otherwise.

Mr. B. wishes to distinguish Calvinism from fate, but is unable to show wherein they differ. He says, 'The great turning point of 'the Arminian controversy, is not so revealed in the scriptures, as 'to be resolvable by the human intellect. The extreme views of 'each side are pleasing enough to the natural man: whether it be 'resolving all into an absolute necessity, with the Stoics and Maho-'medans; or into faith and good works, wrought by man as the 'cause of our election. There are no mysteries here, but neither 'are scriptural.' Here he imagines, that it is an extreme view of Calvinism, which resolves it into absolute necessity; but this is the only proper view that can be taken of it: any other view would destroy the whole system. If Calvinistic election be true, every man's eternal destiny is fixed before he comes into the world, and cannot afterwards be changed by any power in earth or heaven; and it follows that he who has appointed the end has appointed the means: consequently every action and event of a man's life is the result of inflexible destiny. Would any man attempt to prove, that though our end is determined, there is something else left to our own choice? and if this could be proved, it would be to no purpose. If we are doomed before we are born to the eternal pit, it would be of no advantage to be left to choose which way we would fall into it. Therefore, as far as our eternal interests are concerned, Calvinism is the same as Stoical fate and Mahomedan destiny; and there can be no modification of it, which will make it either moderate or practical.

The great danger which Mr. B. sees it needful to warn his students against, is, '*The notion that we can be saved by our own* '*obedience.*' It might be very proper for him to guard them against

this error; but is there no danger in the notion that we can be saved without our own obedience? may not some of his students, like another of his friends, be thrown among Antinomians, and be unprepared to combat their 'pestilent errors?' The latter notion is more congenial with human nature than the former, and in some respects it is the worse error of the two: and we should be more afraid to meet with it in any of our worldly transactions. For though a man who believes that by doing justice, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, he can save himself, may be as much mistaken as another, who entertains the notion that we can be saved without the exercise of either honesty or piety, yet his error is not so inimical to the welfare of society; and supposing both these persons to act up to their own principles, we would rather stand in the place of the man of obedience at the tribunal above. Moreover, when mariners have to sail between two dangerous shoals, if they be only warned of one of them, it is the way to make them suffer shipwreck on the other: under such circumstances, such partial warning is far worse than none at all.

Those who think, the notion, that we can be saved by our own obedience, is the only danger which students in divinity have to be guarded against, very justly conclude, that the most effectual way of doing this is to convince them that they have no duty to do; because all their works are done for them by a superior power; and were they to do any thing themselves it would be a work of supererogation: and provided this be allowed, a truce will be proclaimed between Calvinists and Arminians, and all further hostilities may cease.

Our author tells us, that 'Mr. Simeon has, in a note to his '*Skeletons*, stated some common grounds in which Calvinists and 'Arminians may agree, in a conversation which occurred between 'himself and Mr. Wesley, as follows:—A young minister, about 'three or four years after he was ordained, had the opportunity of 'conversing familiarly with the great and venerable leader of the 'Arminians in this kingdom, and wishing to improve the occasion 'to the uttermost, he addressed him nearly in the following words: 'Sir, I understand that you are called an Arminian, I have been 'called a Calvinist, and therefore I suppose we are to draw daggers; 'but before I consent to begin the combat, with your permission, 'I will ask you a few questions. Permission being very readily 'and kindly granted, the young minister proceeded to ask,—Pray, 'Sir, do you feel yourself a depraved creature, so depraved that you 'would never have thought of turning to God, if God had not 'first put it into your heart? Yes, says the veteran, I do, indeed. 'And do you utterly despair of recommending yourself to God by any 'thing you can do; and look for salvation solely through the blood 'and righteousness of Christ? Yes, solely through Christ. But, 'Sir, suppose you were at first saved by Christ, are you not, some-'how or other, to save yourself afterwards by your own works? 'No, I must be saved by Christ from first to last. Allowing that 'you were first turned by the grace of God, are you not in some

'way or other to help yourself by your own power? No. What, 'then, are you to be upheld every hour and every moment by God, 'as much as an infant in its mother's arms? Yes, altogether. 'And is all your hope in the grace and mercy of God to pre-'serve you to his heavenly kingdom? I have no hope but 'in him. Then, Sir, with your leave, I will put up my dagger 'again: for this is all my Calvinism: this is all my election, my 'justification by faith, my final perseverance: it is in substance all 'that I hold, and as I hold it, and therefore, if you please, instead 'of searching out terms and phrases to be a ground of contention 'between us, we will cordially unite in those things wherein we 'agree.'

However desirable this proposed union may appear to be, it may be offered on unfair terms, and purchased at too dear a rate. Herod and Pilate were made friends by uniting to crucify Christ: and if the Calvinists and Arminians establish a mutual friendship, on the subversion of gospel obedience, the Saviour will be crucified afresh between two thieves. Simeon here informs us, that a man is utterly to despair of recommending himself to God, by any thing he can do; that after he is made a subject of divine grace, he cannot help himself one way or other. And if so, he must utterly despair of doing any thing which God has commanded; or of complying with any of the terms of gospel salvation. But if man can do nothing that is either pleasing to God, or beneficial to himself, in some way or other, for what purpose are commands given him; why are terms of reconciliation proposed, or rewards and punishments set before him? When we see a log of wood, we do not say if you will remove to a certain place you shall be formed into an elegant piece of furniture; and if you do not remove you shall be burnt to ashes: but we procure proper instruments, and take it to the place where it is wanted; and if man is as helpless, he should be treated in the same manner. But the opinion that man is in such a state is opposed to universal experience, and a contradiction to the whole tenour of divine truth. It is written, let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, and he will abundantly pardon. And it is not to be supposed, that God offers his mercy on terms with which man cannot comply, and afterwards punishes him to all eternity for not complying with them. And if man has the power to comply with the terms proposed, he can do something to recommend himself to God, and help himself some way or other. If Simeon had meant, that man cannot do this in his own strength alone; nor in the way of merit, whatever assistance he may obtain; it would have been impertinent to ask these questions; because all this is equally admitted by both parties. And in any other sense, to affirm, that man with all the help given from above, is utterly to despair of doing any thing that will recommend him to God, or help himself in one way or other, is a piece of the rankest Antinomianism which ever pestered the world, or disgraced the Christian name.

When a man is persuaded that he can do nothing useful, it is foolish to make the attempt: he can on this principle suffer no inconvenience by his own neglect; and his only way of running the Christian race is by standing still: if that be not too much exertion.

As to obeying from the heart the good commandment delivered unto him, fighting the good fight of faith, and taking the kingdom by force, these, and all other religious duties are to be done by proxy. And if the 'infant in the arms,' falls foully, it is the nurse's fault. Simeon says the above contains all his Calvinism: and we do not see that any more can be needful; for it irresistibly secures the salvation of the elect, and consigns all the rest to inevitable destruction. If man can do nothing in religion, then the only reason why some live in sin is, because the same work has not been done for them, which has been done for others: hence Mr. S. very properly says, this is all my election; and he might have added, and all my reprobation; for it contains as much of both as can be found in all Calvin's decrees.

Why, then, it may be asked, did Mr. Wesley agree with it? We reply, that Mr. Simeon here tells his own story, and states, that *nearly* these words were used: but we may have nearly the same words, and be far from the signification in which they were then employed. The answers of Mr. Wesley are, however, such as he might have been expected to return, if some additional explanation had been appended; and whether any was given is not stated. If none was given, why was he not asked, what he meant by these lines in one of his hymns?

'A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.'

People may seem to agree, when their opinions are quite opposite; because the truth is not always the whole truth; and what is truth in one point of view, is not so in another. Two eminent artists take each a sketch of an elegant mansion; which, on comparison, are found to correspond, for they were both south views: but if one of them had taken a north view of the same house, they would have been found to vary: and if each had been taken for the whole, the difference could not have been reconciled.

Mr. Simeon has sketched one side of the gospel system, in which Mr. Wesley agrees with him; but there is another side of it, respecting which their opinions differed. If we take Mr. Simeon's scheme as a part only of the gospel plan of salvation, it is true; but when taken for the whole, it is false and pernicious. His drift is to prove that man can do nothing to please God or help himself, either before his conversion or after it: but with the scripture for our authority, we assert that the grace of God does not supersede human endeavours; that man, in every stage of his religious progress, has a part to act, and if he does not act his part, he cannot be saved. To confirm our position, we may produce the words of Mr. Bickersteth himself, when he writes without prejudice. He

says, 'The general principle, seek ye first the kingdom of God 'and his righteousness, should regulate all our studies. Cultivate 'the habit of personal religion. Let the student scrupulously regard 'retired duties. Thus he will keep alive the flame of devotion. — 'The consistent uniform walk of the Christian is an engine of im- 'mense power. In the approaching day of universal judgment it 'will not be enquired what we have read, but what we have done; 'not how eloquently we have spoken, but how holily we have lived: '—The scripture statement is, If ye know these things, happy are 'ye if ye do them.'

What is the meaning of all this, if man cannot help himself one way or other? We ought to be fully persuaded, that all the grace which heaven bestows will not save a man without his own exertions: to assert the contrary is at all times false, and under some circumstances absurd and dangerous in the extreme. This has already been proved and illustrated by the similitude of ransomed slaves; but as the subject is of vital importance, and the main point in dispute, and that on which all the others depend, we may be allowed to resume the subject. In the first place let us consider, whether a man has any thing to do in the commencement of a religious course, which is indispensible to his entrance into the way to the kingdom, and which grace alone will not do. To make this understood, let it be supposed, that a vessel at sea strikes upon an isolated rock and goes to pieces; but the men have time to climb upon the craggs, and secure the most valuable part of the cargo. Here they see themselves surrounded by a deep and boisterous ocean, far from land, and without the means of escape: and what renders their situation more perilous is, when the tide returns, the rock on which they stand will be overwhelmed, and every thing upon it swept away. The governor of a neighbouring port sees their dismal situation, and has compassion on them; and gives orders to the master of a vessel to go and bring them safe to land. When this captain comes alongside the rock, he invites all who are upon it to come into his vessel; and tells them he will convey them safe into harbour, free of expense, but they must leave their goods behind. With this they are not willing to comply; as they think the cargo very valuable, and hope to reach the land without making such a sacrifice: and they enquire why such terms are proposed to them. The captain replies that such are the strict orders of the governor, from which he cannot deviate. The reason for these orders he understands to be, that the plague was in the place from whence they came, and their goods contain the infection, and when they come to be opened out will propogate the distemper: so that it is for their own advantage, as well as that of other people, that those goods should be abandoned. And as no other conditions can be offered them, as no other vessel will come to their rescue, and the tide will soon return and sweep every thing away from the place on which they stand, he urges them as they value their lives, to go on board without any further hesitation. With this request some of the shipwrecked mariners comply, and are taken to land; others refuse, and at the return of the tide they

perish. Those who were taken to land were treated with much kindness, and the governor liberally supplied their wants. And when they reflect on the dangers they have escaped, and on the kindness and generosity of the governor, they cordially declare that they were saved by grace, when they could not help themselves one way or other. This is the language of gratitude and humility, and it is likewise strictly true, but not the whole truth: to a person who hears no more, it leaves something unaccounted for: who may say, In your deplorable condition it is evident you could be saved by grace only, but many of your companions in tribulation perished; and as there was grace enough in the governor, and room in the vessel for all, how is it that the rest perished?—It was entirely their own fault.—This I believe, and what I wish to understand is, were they not willing to be saved entirely by grace?—Yes, they were anxious to be saved by grace, if they might have had it on their own terms: that is, if they might have brought their infected goods with them; but this was what the wisdom and goodness of the governor could not admit them to do; and as they would not come into the vessel without their goods, they remained on the fatal rock till the flood swept them away. Thus we see that they perished by their own fault; and likewise that all the others were saved entirely by grace; but it is likewise evident that those who were saved complied with the terms proposed; they did what the others would not do; and if they had not done this, they could not have been saved. All this is admitted to be correct; but it is asked why we are so tenacious to have this part of the story told? We reply that we have two reasons for it: the first is our concern for the honour of the governor. We have indeed no doubt, that those who say the deliverence was all of grace, and give no further explanation, sincerely intend to promote the governor's honour; but by their indiscretion they bring upon him the greatest odium: for their statement makes it appear that he was, indirectly at least, the cause of all the other mariners finding a watery grave; for if his grace, as is intimated, was unconditional, then the event shews that it was not extended to all; because he sent out a vessel for part of them, and the same trouble and expense would have saved the whole had he been mindful to save them. If he had used no expedient to save any, we might not have been able to say what was proper or convenient for him to do in such a case: but when a vessel was fitted out, every way sufficient to bring away the whole, at as little trouble and expense as bringing a part of them, it was unheard-of cruelty to suffer so many men to perish. For those who were lost, were no more deserving of such a fate than the rest; their lives were as valuable, and they would have been as useful members of society. And you admit the governor had no reason for making this difference but his own pleasure; which is the same as saying he had no reason at all: and to consign so many human beings to destruction without any reason, is an indelible stain on his character. All you can say against this is, that they perished by their own fault; and then the question returns, How does this appear? They were no

more faulty than the rest; and if the grace had been unconditional it could not have failed to save them. You cannot, therefore, make it out to be their fault, unless you acknowledge that terms were proposed with which they had a power to comply: the proof of which is, others, under similar circumstances, and who were men of like passions with themselves, did comply with the same terms; and without that compliance they could not have been saved. And when you have proceeded so far, it will appear that they did help themselves some way or other; that there was a point at which grace could not save any of them without their own endeavours. It is in this way only that the governor's honour can be vindicated: and thus when the whole truth is told, grace shines forth in all its effulgence; without any accompanying cloud of reprobation.

Another reason why we desire the whole truth to be told is, because otherwise a foundation would be laid for dangerous and fatal errors. We may suppose shipwrecks, such as we have described, to be common occurrences; that another happens the next day, and the captain is again sent out in the same manner as before, and finds the unfortunate sailors devising methods to effect their own escape. But he acquaints them with the gracious intentions of the governor, and tells them that all who have ever escaped from that fatal rock to the desired haven, have been saved entirely at his expense; that they did not effect their own deliverence either in whole or in part; that all who waited for any other vessel have been miserably disappointed; and all who have attempted to swim ashore, or to construct a float of the wreck, have inevitably gone to the bottom; that the governor was alone able to save them, and had furnished the means of their deliverance by his own unmerited favour, and would have all the honour of it himself. And as they had been vainly expecting to save themselves, the doctrines of grace alone, under such circumstances, are words fitly spoken; like apples of gold in pictures of silver. But yet they do not succeed so well as might have been expected. The sailors are, indeed, convinced that they cannot make their own escape, and receive the doctrines of grace with avidity and joy; but when told they must leave their contaminated cargo, they refuse, under the notion that grace will dispense with their obedience in that particular, and that if they were to make such a sacrifice of their property, it would be doing something towards their own deliverance, which would rob the governor of his honour. Moreover, they imagine that if their cargo cannot go with them, they must not abandon it by any act of their own; for they are to be drawn away by a crane, in a manner they cannot resist; not, indeed, unwillingly, for the governor will make them willing in the day of his power. Now, if you find these men under the influence of such fancies, and only tell them that they are to be saved entirely by grace, you confirm their fatal delusions; you are, therefore, to tell them, that they mistake the doctrines of grace; that the grace which bringeth salvation, is never offered but on some condition, to be performed by those who receive it; and in their case the condition is the abandonment of their infected cargo. You ought to say to them, grace itself has

its limits, and will be extended no further to you than has been stated: and you must now either save yourselves or perish. Therefore escape for your lives.

In like manner, every invitation which Christ gives to sinners, requires them to leave their sins; which is something they have to do themselves before their conversion can be completed; and by doing what is required, they recommend themselves to God, and 'some way or other help themselves.' The necessity of obedience on the part of man, is as fully established in the Scriptures, as the doctrines of grace; and those who leave out either one or the other, suppress one half of the Bible, and render the other perfectly ridiculous.

In the next place, let us consider if a man has any thing to do after his conversion. Mr. Simeon says, 'Allowing that you were 'first turned by the grace of God, are you not in some way or other 'to help yourself by your own power?' We answer, to be sure we are. Are not you endeavouring to help yourself by the present argument? but what you advance is nothing but sophistry, as we shall proceed to shew by the following illustration.

However little liberality there may be in real life, it may abound in the regions of imagination: we may, therefore, suppose that a wealthy nobleman, finding the inhabitants of a certain village in indigence and want, settles on them an annual income, every way adequate to their maintenance. But after this is received, they do not all conduct themselves in the same manner. One, for instance, manages his affairs with so much discretion, as to live in comfort and respectability; but another is so careless, intemperate, and extravagant, that his income seems to do him no good; as soon as it is received it appears to vanish away; it is in effect gone before it comes; when he has paid his debts of honour, there is nothing left for his other creditors, nor to keep himself from want and misery. A stranger pays a visit to the prudent man's habitation, and finds it neat and clean, well furnished, and not in want of any thing, which can contribute to the comfort of its owner. There is a garden in front, abounding with fruits and flowers, and every thing proper for the season. On one side there is a meandering stream, passing through fertile meadows; and on the other, a well laid out shrubbery, where the birds are singing among the branches; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs; and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Before the visitor has time to express his gratification, the owner of the house says, I would not have you lie under any mistake in reference to my circumstances. I am not an independent gentleman, as from what you see, you might be led to suppose, my wants are indeed well supplied, but it is by the kindness and bounty of my benefactor; he paid off all my debts, and has since furnished me with money which has purchased all I possess; not a penny of my own has been expended therein; and were he to withhold his supplies, I should fall again into my former state of want and beggary. Then, says the visitor, you attribute all your prosperity to the grace of your benefactor; and he says, yes, entirely to his grace.

The stranger now departs to pay a visit to the next neighbour, whose negligence and mismanagement gave to his residence, the picture of wretchedness and desolation; and might have reminded him of the words of Solomon;—'By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through. I went by the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down.' The visitor, however, after making his way through much litter, would have entered the house, but the door was bolted to keep out the bailiffs: so he went on his way till he overtook another traveller; to whom he began to say, the nobleman who has taken this village under his protection, however liberal upon the whole, is very partial in the distribution of his bounty; some of his dependents live like gentlemen, and others like beggars. The other replies, you labour under a mistake; the nobleman you speak of makes the same allowance to every man in the village; all the difference you see in their circumstances, is the result of their own management. But I was told, he replies, by the first person I visited, that all his prosperity was of grace. — And so it was in the sense in which he stated it: but that man was one who does not receive the grace in vain: the owner of the other house where you called, receives the grace in vain, which makes all the difference between them. Then am I to understand that a man's well-being depends on his own works. Yes, after the bounty is received, it depends upon his management entirely. Ought we not then to say, that it depends on grace and works conjointly. That may not be proper, because each has its own department. If the man had his income partly by bounty, and partly by labour, it would be by grace and works conjointly; but his income is all of bounty, and the management only devolves upon himself.——But when I spoke to that person, he mentioned nothing of his own management, but attributed every thing to grace. ——It was very proper for him to do so at that time, for to grace belongs every thing that is marvellous and meritorious. His own management, if it could be exercised, would be unavailing without grace; and it does not extend to his benefactor; he continues as much a pensioner as ever; and considering what he receives, his house might have been better furnished, and his garden more improved; so that he not only sees himself constantly dependant, but likewise unworthy of the bounty he receives: it is, therefore, no wonder that he spoke of grace only. But there are seasons when it is needful to speak of the management, as well as of the bounty; and one of these seasons is when the management is in danger of being neglected; and another is when people fall into such a mistake as you just now did; of thinking that all the difference found among the inhabitants of the village, originates in the unequal distribution of the bounty given them. Some attempt to soften this by saying, if any be in want it is their own fault: but they cannot make this appear, without admitting that something depends upon a man's own management; that after grace is given, he

may, in some way or other, help himself. Every part of the above illustration is confirmed by Scripture, which uniformly maintains, that God's grace, and man's obedience, are both indispensibly requisite in the concerns of our salvation.

Mr. B. has laid down an excellent rule for the interpretation of Scripture, in the following words :—'God has not always in one 'place fully expressed his truth, but in the whole Scriptures, he 'guides us to just views, and guards us against every error connected 'with the truth. Against the self-righteous, how plain is Paul; 'against the licentious, how express is James.' After having laid down this rule for others, we are sorry he should so far forget it himself, as to build a system on one part of Scripture only, to the utter subversion of all the rest.

'The concurrence of God and man,' says Archbishop Bramhall, 'in producing the act of our believing or conversion to God, is so 'evident in holy scripture, that it is in vain to oppose it. If God 'did not concur, the scripture would not say, — It is God that work-'eth in us both the will and the deed. If man did not concur, the 'scripture would not say, Work out your own salvation with fear and 'trembling. If our repentance were God's work alone, God would 'not say to man, Turn unto me with all your heart: and if repen-'tance were man's work alone, we had no need to pray, Turn us, 'O Lord, and we shall be turned. We are commanded to repent 'and to believe: in vain are commandments given to them, who 'cannot at all concur to the acting of that which is commanded. 'Faith and repentance are proposed unto us, as conditions to obtain 'blessedness and avoid destruction; but to propose conditions which 'we have no power either to accept or refuse, is a mere mockery. 'Our unbelief and impenitence is imputed to us as our own fault, 'which could not be the case if we had neither power to concur with 'the grace of God nor to refuse it. In the scripture we read, the 'Lord is my helper; but if we did not co-operate with God, he 'could not be said to help us. There must, therefore, be co-opera-'tion. Neither doth this concurrence of man at all entrench upon 'the power or honour of God, because this very liberty to co-oper-'ate is his gift, and the manner of acting his own institution.'

'The exclusive consideration,' says another writer, 'of particular 'texts of scripture, without adverting to others which take a different 'view of the subject, seems to have been the source of most of those 'errors which have prevailed in the Christian world.'

Hence, we are to remember that all the truth is not spoken in one part of scripture; but is to be supplied by what is said in another place; and then we shall see that a divine influence and our own endeavours must both concur in all our religious duties.

Let us select a few passages as a specimen.——Him hath God exalted, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins: Repent ye, therefore, and be converted that your iniquities may be blotted out.——You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherefore he saith, awake thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead.——I will take away the heart of stone, and give you a

heart of flesh: To-day if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts.——Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened: Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, &c.——Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: Having these promises let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.——The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from sin: They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.——I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes: In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; but they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit.——Who hath brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light: This is condemnation that men love darkess rather than light.————No man can come unto me except the Father draw him: How often would I have gathered you as a hen doth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not: ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.——You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you: Mary hath chosen the good part. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.——Go into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in: All the day long have I stretched forth my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people.——There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved: And with many other words did he testify and exhort saying, save yourselves from the untoward generation.——To finish transgression and bring in an everlasting righteousness: How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.——Ye are God's workmanship: We, then, as workers together with him.——By grace are ye saved: Receive not the grace of God in vain.——What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe: The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.——Not by acts of righteousness which we have done but of his mercy he saveth us: Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.——We are not under the law but under grace: The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared, teaching us to live soberly, righteously, and godly.——Not by might or by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts: Quench not the spirit.——He hath delivered us from the power of darkness: Strive to enter in at the strait gate.——He shall guide me by his counsel all my days: See that ye walk circumspectly.——Without me ye can do nothing: I can do all things through Christ strengthening me.——Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation: Keep yourselves in the love of God: He keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not.

From these passages, which relate both to divine influence and to man's endeavours, we may see the necessity of comparing one with another; for otherwise we shall pervert the truth. If we take either class of scriptures exclusively, though we may use the language of holy writ, yet we shall not speak as the oracles of God; but shall do the work of him, who blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the gospel should shine unto them. There is no divine influence spoken of in scripture, in reference to

man's salvation which may not be resisted, and rendered unavailing in some stage of its progress: there is none which does not require a corresponding agency on the part of man. And this divine influence is never withheld, except as a punishment to those by whom it has been resisted. If men continue in an unconverted state, it is not because the grace of God has not been given them, but because they have received it in vain.

Hence, men are to help themselves some way or other: if they do not, all other help will prove unavailing; for all the help which heaven affords will not do man's work. When God works in him, he must work out his own salvation. Under some circumstances he can only be saved by his own obedience: for he that setteth bounds to the ocean which it cannot pass over, hath limited the extent of his grace to mankind; and when it has reached its extent nothing can save a man but his own acquiesence and concurrence with that grace. When the angels had brought Lot out of Sodom, they were to proceed no further with him; hence one of them said, Escape for thy life, lest thou be consumed. They had done their part, and he was to do his own, or suffer the consequences.—Ample provision was made for the salvation of the Jews by the merits of Christ; and Peter said,—Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities. What was the reason that in this blessing they did not all participate? St. Paul answers that they did not all obey the gospel. And without that obedience neither the death of Christ, nor the pouring out of the Spirit, could save them. Under these circumstances St. Peter, who had been exhibiting the fulness and freeness of gospel grace, exhorted them saying, save yourselves. That is, receive on gospel terms the Saviour of sinners; who becomes the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him. And he will take vengeance on them that obey not the gospel: from which when they had an offer of mercy, their own obedience would have saved them; or there can be no truth in the scriptures, nor justice in their punishment.

It is objected, 'that if men in any sense of the word save themselves, either in whole or in part, their works are meritorious; boasting is not excluded; salvation is not all of grace, and Christ is deprived of his glory.'

If there be any truth in this objection, let us all become avowed Antinomians at once. If Calvinists would abide by either one side of a question or the other, we might argue with them with more satisfaction; but sometimes they assert that except men obey the gospel they cannot be saved; at other times they endeavour to prove, that such obedience would be pernicious to himself, and dishonourable to God.—Further, in reference to the objection we reply, that the position it assails is established by the scriptures, whatever may be drawn from it by way of inference. And likewise that no such inferences can be fairly deduced from it, as are contained in the objection.—That the position here assailed is established by the scripture, has been sufficiently proved already. In what other sense can

St. Peter be understood, when he says, If ye do these things ye shall never fall. In what other sense can St. Paul be understood, when he says, the righteous judge shall render to every man according to his deeds. In what other sense can our Saviour be understood when he says, Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand? If heaven propose any terms to sinners, then when man complies with them he may be said to save himself; and from this no such inferences as the objection contains can be fairly drawn; as we may see by the following illustration:—

A successful general storms a fortified place, which had long held out against him; and by the laws of war he might have put all the garrison to the sword; but out of clemency he calls upon them to surrender, and promises to spare their lives. Some of them obey the summons and are spared; others refuse and are cut off. You afterwards ask how it was that some of the garrison escaped, while others were put to the sword? and they reply, we saved ourselves by laying down our arms. In that case, you say, the merit of your preservation belongs to yourselves, and not to the humanity of the conqueror. To this they reply, We do not understand your mode of argument; but what we have stated is the fact, in whatever light it may be viewed. But we were far from thinking that any merit was due to ourselves in this affair; for our surrender was not with us a matter of honour but convenience: and the other part of our garrison thought it disgraceful: and on that account chose rather to die with arms in their hands. And when we say that we saved ourselves by obeying the summons, we acknowledge at the same time that we owe our lives to the clemency of the general; and this is the first time we ever heard that he had not all the honour of it; and we cannot yet understand why he should not. With regard to our saying that we saved ourselves, we only mean that we accepted of his proffered mercy: and we use the same language as was used to us on that important occasion. When the commanding officer was prepared to make a charge, which would have cut us all off to a man, he cried aloud, Save yourselves; and we understood his meaning and yielded obedience. If you, sir, had been there at the time, and had told us we must not do any thing for our own deliverence, lest boasting should not be excluded, &c., we might have stood with arms in our hands until we had all been cut down. If you say that all the honour of our escape belongs to the general, we say the same; and between this and the former declaration there is no contradiction: when they both come to be explained. We were undoubtedly indebted to his favour for our escape; for we had given him much provocation; we were entirely in his power, and had forfeited our lives by the laws of war; but he offered us mercy on condition of laying down our arms, and by complying with it we saved our lives. But surely all boasting is excluded from us; and whenever we speak of the general we say, That is the man who spared our lives; and would

have done the same with the rest of the garrison if it had not been their own fault. But if you could prove that by complying with the offered terms, we did in no sense save ourselves, then it would follow, that the general was not equally favourable to the other part of the garrison: and that it was on this account they all perished: and by this means under pretence of promoting his honour, you would heap disgrace upon his memory which would never be wiped away.

What has now been stated, applies to the case of sinners: the Almighty offers them mercy on condition that they lay down the weapons of their rebellion; and those who do so, may in that sense be said to save themselves: but it is by receiving a free pardon. — But it is affirmed that if any thing be done as a condition, the grace we receive is not free. And if so there is no free grace in the salvation of sinners; for there are always some specified terms with which they have to comply; such as receiving Christ; believing or obeying the gospel; and in whatever way they are expressed, they include the forsaking of sin. And are we to give up the plainest declarations of scripture for the sake of a metaphysical distinction; and a distinction which no sound reason can establish? For, there may be a condition when the gift is free. If a person receives the gift of an estate, worth a thousand pounds a year, on condition of paying the annual sum of one penny, we admit the gift is not free; because however small, something has to be paid by one party and received by the other, which to that amount, is a real deduction from the value of the gift. But suppose the same estate to be given on condition of fulfilling either the seventh or the eighth commandment; we should consider the gift to be free; for it makes no deduction from the value of the gift; it confers no benefit on the giver; and it leaves the donation unimpaired; it imposes nothing which is not for the advantage of the receiver: nothing but what was his duty before the gift was received. It is true indeed, he might prefer having some acknowledgment to pay, and be left at liberty to commit what crimes he pleased; but though it is not so, it is still free, for it is given without reserve, and received without deduction. In like manner gospel salvation is free; though there are conditions with which we have to comply, both before we receive it and after it is in our possession. Yet the fulfilment of these conditions detracts nothing from the honour of the Saviour's mercy and grace; nor confers any merit on ourselves. Did the Israelites merit their own deliverance, when they sprinkled the door posts of their houses with the blood of the paschal lamb? or, when they looked up to the brazen serpent in the wilderness? After we have done the will of God we are to say we are unprofitable servants: Gabriel, the archangel can merit nothing at the hands of his Creator. Hence the objection we are considering vanishes away. Those who make it allow that man may sometimes do that which is lawful and right, and yet that the holiest man on earth can merit nothing from God. So that the objection is not only contemptible for its imbecility, but is in direct opposition to the sentiments which they themselves at other times strenuously maintain.

How is it, that those who contend that man can do nothing to recommend himself to God, or help himself one way or other, do not see that by this means they form a justifiable excuse for every man living in sin? Their position goes to prove that no crime could have been omitted; that no man has any reason to blame himself for any thing he has done, or left undone: and if he be finally lost, it is not his fault. The notion that man can do nothing in the service of God, is supposed to be derived from the writings of St. Paul; who, nevertheless, seems to have been so far deceived on this point, as to exhort us to be always abounding in the work of the Lord: and of this he set the example. He laboured more abundantly than the other apostles: and under this delusion he lived and died; saying at the last, I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. If it be pleaded, that he did this through Christ strengthening him; we reply, that it is on this principle we proceed throughout; we contend that all the good which a man does, is by the assistance of divine grace. But then we contend likewise that sufficient grace is afforded; and all the grace given, may be either improved, or received in vain.

But in order to prove, that a man's salvation does in no sense whatever depend on his own conduct, it is asked, 'How is it that 'all men do not finally and fatally resist the Holy Spirit; seeing all 'are by nature alike depraved?' We reply, that it is not to be expected, that every thing in religion can be brought to a level with our capacity. Whatever is clearly stated in scripture, is to be received as a fact; though the manner of it may be above our comprehension. When there are difficulties on both sides of a question, we ought to take that side where the difficulties are of less magnitude: we are not to strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. It is indisputable that some people act better than others; and the cause of this must either be in themselves, or in something else over which they have no control. Those who adopt the latter alternative, maintain that this better conduct is the result of special grace; granted to these persons, and withheld from all the rest of mankind; for no reason but the pleasure of God. And if all the difference in the actions of men, be the result of such a partial distribution of divine grace, it follows, that man is not in a state of probation; that all God's offers of mercy, except to the chosen few, are insincere; that there is no more use in directing our speech to men on their eternal concerns, than there would be in addressing as many stocks and stones; and that there will be neither wisdom nor equity in the judgment at the last day.

Therefore, if the difficulty of accounting for some men acting better than others, was greater than it is, we should still believe that in some sense it depended on themselves, rather than take the other side of the question; which exonerates sinners from blame, dishonours God, plunges us into the vortex of Stoical destiny, and reduces the Christian Revelation to a vile absurdity.

But let us see whether the difficulty before us is too great to be

encountered. It amounts to no more than this, that among free agents in the same moral state, some act better than others. And we ask, what else could be expected, supposing man to be a proper subject to have rewards and punishments set before him? Amongst the angels, who were equally pure, some fell, and others kept their first estate; and of two human beings equally holy, one was in transgression before the other. Why then may not some do better than others, among beings who are equally depraved, and equally assisted by divine grace? If man be not a mere automaton, nothing else could be reasonably expected. If men, in proportion to the aid afforded them, always acted equally well, we should have reason to conclude that they were mere machines; and could not be made responsible for their conduct; but if among those who are equally assisted, one can cease to do evil, and learn to do well, while another does not do this; then we can conceive of men being accountable creatures; and that it will be the manifestation of the righteous judgment of God; when he receives some to heaven, and dooms others to hell. And if the righteous Judge of all the earth will make so much difference between one man and another, at the great day of account, there must have been some difference in their conduct originating in themselves.

For the purpose of refutation, we had selected from Mr. Bickersteth's book many times more than has been presented to the reader; but if the part brought forward has been refuted, all the rest must of course fall to the ground; for when the whole foundation is removed, no part of the building can stand.

Our author considers all divines as enemies to the doctrine of justification by faith, who have not his notions on that subject, and the same method of expressing them; but it is our intention to show that even on this point, he runs into some great mistakes, which the interest of religion, and the credit of the gospel require to be rectified. This will be the subject of another publication; which has for some time been ready for the press, and may be soon expected to make its appearance. In this will be stated the manner in which St. Paul and St. James may be reconciled on the article of justification.

How Calvinism, which, in all its bearings, and under all its forms, is a vile corruption of divine truth, obtained an establishment in the opinion of mankind, does not devolve upon us to shew: nor is it convenient at present to enter on such an extensive excursion. Yet it may be observed, that there seems to be a natural propensity in the human mind to the notion of fate or destiny; and by means of this notion, many escape the lashes of their own conscience, for the disasters which their own conduct has occasioned: and flatter themselves with the hope of future prosperity without the necessity of their own endeavours. And where this notion has taken root, Calvin's doctrines of the divine decrees may be expected to find a ready admission: for it is the same thing under a different and more plausible modification. Besides, the system under consideration may be much admired, and may draw many advocates to engage in

its defence, because it displays the fertility of human invention, abounds with paradoxes, has no affinity to the common sense of mankind, and more especially, because it devises a substitute for personal obedience. But our refutation of it goes forth entirely destitute of these fascinating charms: it contains no theories of man's invention; it exhibits nothing built on metaphysical speculations; nothing above the capacities of the common people. It does not place any dependence on isolated passages; but rests on the obvious, connected, and uniform testimony of scripture. Passages hard to be understood are subjected to the test of other parts of scripture, where the same sentiment is expressed with great plainness of speech; so that a wayfaring man need not err therein. On other accounts it may be despised or indignantly rejected; especially as it lays all the blame of man's destruction at his own door, and leaves every man under moral obligation: by showing the necessity of gospel obedience; for faith without works is dead. But whoever may reject the truth, there is encouragement in remembering, that wisdom is justified of her children.

However much of our author's work may remain unnoticed, we expect it will be found on examination, that we have not failed to look his strongest arguments full in the face; that we have not assailed the outworks without approaching the citadel. And whether we have left his system any foundation to stand upon, we must now leave the reader to judge.

In contending with such a man as Mr. Bickersteth, who we believe is possessed of genuine piety, and eminent for learning and talent; and who says so many good things in a pleasing and elegant style, there is a danger of sacrificing the interests of truth, to an ill-timed complacence, and a false delicacy. There is a danger of not calling things by their right names; of sparing error for the sake of the company in which it is found. If any thing of this sort appears in the present dispute, it has not been done by design, but has been an act of inadvertency; for we have not had the man in view, but his system; and our intention has been to take the sword of the spirit, and hew Agag in pieces before the Lord.

The system which our author so strenuously advocates is, that a certain number of persons are from eternity predestinated unconditionally to eternal life; and all the rest eternally excluded from all possibility of salvation: and this doctrine must be either true or false. If it be false, it ought to be refuted; because it contradicts the scriptures, dishonours God, and is injurious to mankind. But on the supposition that it is true, then it is no matter what kind of opinions are propagated through the world; for the most monstrous errors that ever emerged from beneath, cannot cause one of the elect to perish; and if all the angels were seen flying from heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach, not one of the reprobates could be saved. And therefore whatever reasons might be assigned for believing such a doctrine, that eager desire which is manifested by many for its propagation, is the most unaccountable phenomenon, which the human mind has ever exhibited in any age of the world.

Because it is acting without any conceivable motive; and being zealous about nothing: since on their principle no opinion can do either good or evil, in reference to an eternal world: so that when once a person has persuaded himself, that every man's future destiny is irrevocably determined, if he had any degree of consistency, he would be totally regardless of what kind of opinions might prevail among mankind; since he believes that nothing can prevent the salvation of the elect, nor hinder the damnation of the reprobate. But those who find that these are not the doctrines of the scriptures, have a powerful motive to confute them; lest they should dishonour God, and ruin immortal souls.

T. SCOTT, PRINTER

CALVINISM EXPELLED

FROM THE

CRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION,

BY

RECONCILING St. PAUL AND St. JAMES,

IN REFERENCE TO FAITH AND WORKS:

A REPLY TO THE REV. E. BICKERSTETH.

BY

ABRAHAM SCOTT.

t is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." --- MATT. xxi. 13.

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1834.

A REPLY, &c.

Among those Divines who are called evangelical, there are no phrases more frequently used, nor with a higher tone of exultation, than these—Faith is the gift of God—Justification is by faith only—yet these phrases admit of various interpretations, and may be made to correspond with opposite creeds. They may be made the vehicles of the most important truths; or of the most dangerous falsehoods. Hence when we meet with them we have to ascertain the sense in which they are employed, before we can give them either our approval or disapproval.

If faith, as many maintain, is the gift of God in every sense of the word, whose fault is it when it is not received? and how is it that so few come into the possession of it? If it be given to a select number, for no reason but the pleasure of the Almighty, why are men in general exhorted to believe; or condemned for unbelief? why is believing made the subject of so many precious promises; and unbelief of so many awful threatenings? Why did Christ so highly commend the faith of some; and marvel at the unbelief of others? If faith be exclusively the gift of God, how are we to understand this passage—He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned? No man can add one cubit to his stature—would it not then be unreasonable to make his eternal salvation depend on being so many cubits high, since that is a gift of nature over which he has no control? And would it not be equally unreasonable and unjust to make a man's salvation depend on faith, if faith be no more within his own power than his stature? If it be granted, that faith, from first to last is the gift of God exclusive of our own endeavours, then every thing is confirmed which Calvin has written, respecting Election and Reprobation. But the arguments which overthrow these doctrines, prove that faith is not the gift of God in every sense of the word. The apostle is supposed by some to assert, that faith is the gift of the Almighty, when he says, by grace are ye saved; through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. But those who have more critically examined the original have shewn, that what the apostle affirms is, that salvation is the gift of God: and this is not so given but men may neglect it. But though the apostle does not expressly say that faith in particular is the gift of God, yet we admit it is among

those good and perfect gifts which come down from above: yet we are to seek for these gifts, and when they are given they may be either used, or received in vain; and if any man have not faith it is his own fault. The human eye is the gift of God; but the benefit arising from it depends on our own exercise of that organ. Christ was exalted to give repentance unto Israel: but when he gives the grace of repentance, he requires us to repent; he will not do this for us. So the *grace* of faith is a gift from above, but the *exercise* of it devolves upon ourselves. In faith there are both ability and exercise: the former is the gift of God; the latter is the act of man.

At an early age, Dr. A. Clarke read the Pilgrim's Progress, and, wondered that Christian who had a key in his bosom, did not sooner open the door of Doubting Castle; on which he makes the following remarks, 'He has often since been led to express his surprise 'that both John Bunyan the author, and those who hold his creed, 'should not have been more aware of these great truths,—that no 'grace of God can be at all effectual to the salvation of the soul, 'unless it be faithfully *used;*—that we may have the power to be-'lieve to the saving of the soul, and *yet not use that power*, and so 'continue in darkness and condemnation: for, although *faith* be the '*gift of God*, it is only so as to the grace of faith, *or power to* '*believe;* but the act of faith, or believing, is the act of the soul, 'under the aid of that power or grace; for, although, to believe with-'out the power, is as impossible as to make a world, yet, when we 'have that power, we may believe and be saved. God no more be-'lieves for us, than he repents for us. We may have the grace of 'repentance,—a deep conviction from the spirit, that we have sin-'ned; but we may harden our hearts against that grace, and so quench 'the spirit. In like manner we may have the grace or power to 'believe, and yet hesitate, and not cast ourselves on divine mercy. 'Christian had the key of faith in his bosom, long before he pulled 'it out to open the door of his prison house.'

We see therefore that this phrase, Faith is the gift of God, may be either true or false according to the sense in which it is spoken: and this is likewise the case with that other phrase, Justification by faith alone. If a person using these words, means a faith inseparably connected with gospel obedience, then he stands on tenable ground: but if he intends merely a naked faith, then he establishes Antinomianism: though he may have no such intention. For if a person can be justified when he has a bare faith, without any other gracious disposition or exercise, he may be eternally saved in the same manner; but such a notion is what no inspired writer ever intended to establish, as will appear if we compare one part of the scripture with another. Hence many who have taken a proper view of the gospel covenant, have seen it needful to guard from abuse the doctrine of justification by faith. Yet in doing this they have been fiercely assailed, and vilely reproached. They have been represented as enemies to the doctrine itself, which it was said they endeavoured to subvert, in order to establish human merit. No eminence in piety, learning, or talent, could screen them from the

shafts of calumny: a cloud has been spread over their other excellencies, and their reputation has been sunk as far as possible towards the nether regions. — How far this applies to Mr. Bickersteth,* we shall proceed to notice.

One object this author had in view was to give a list, and a recommendation of books; and considering the sentiments he has embraced, we might expect what kind of books would meet with his approbation. If they be sufficiently calvinistic, it covers in his estimation a multitude of faults: if they are not of this description, whatever other excellence they may possess, they are to be cast to the moles and the bats. The notice he takes of the commentaries of Wesley, Benson, and Clarke, is with a design to lessen them in public estimation. He highly extols some despicable productions, and casts into the shade some of the greatest ornaments of the established Church.

By a quotation from Milner he says, 'Tillotson with all his might corrupted the doctrine of justification by faith.' — This we regard as a gross and groundless calumny, against a most able and amiable divine, and a writer of unrivalled excellence. — Our author states that, 'Tillotson allows the first beginning of good in man to be of God's grace.' But what he alleges against him is contained in the following words, 'Tillotson speaks of faith, repentance, and a purpose of 'sincere obedience, as conditions before justification, — as recom-'mending us to the favour of God.' This it seems is what has given such mighty offence to this Calvinist. But we ask, which of the three qualifications here mentioned, as preparatory to justification, can be dispensed with, unless we go to another gospel? Is it faith, or repentance, or a purpose of obedience? What saith the scriptures?—He that cometh unto God must believe that he is; and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him — Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your iniquities may be blotted out — Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest — Is it possible for any person to comply with these and other similar precepts and injunctions, without having faith, repentance, and a purpose of sincere obedience? If this be corrupting the doctrine of justification by faith, it was corrupted at the fountain head; for it was preached in this manner by Christ and his apostles.

But it appears Bishop Bull has offended more grievously, by stating that 'Faith, to which justification is attached by St. Paul, is not to be understood as one single virtue, but denotes the whole condition of the gospel covenant.'—'This' says our author, 'is making 'faith a principle which includes (not merely produces) works; 'which in truth is identical with justification by works, which are

* The reader may not see the reason why Mr. Bickersteth is here so abruptly introduced, nor why his book is made the subject of our remarks; he is therefore to be informed that when this was written it was not intended to be a separate publication, but to have made a part of a former one, entitled "Animadversions on the defence of Calvinistic Doctrines, contained in the Rev. E. Bickersteth's Christian Student." What is now called a reply to this gentleman, is a continuation of the former work.

'clothed with merit sufficient to cover all sins and justify before 'God.'— So that 'the faith by which we are justified is not the prin- 'ciple that apprehends the Saviour, and thus secures the exclusive 'glory to him.'

These are heavy charges; but how are they supported? on what foundation do they rest? Without any intention of vindicating Bishop Bull's views on the subject, we may enquire how these charges against him are substantiated. — If there be a gospel covenant, we should suppose it was needful to attend to it, in order to find acceptance. When our Saviour commenced his public ministry, mankind were laden with iniquity, and could not be justified by the deeds of the law; but they might obtain this blessing by the new covenant; the terms of which he published in these words, Repent ye and believe the gospel—and surely St. Paul could mean no less when he only mentioned faith. On this ground the Bishop asserts that faith, to which justification is attached, is not a solitary virtue; and however great offence this may have given, we ask, how any man who has read the scriptures, can for a moment suppose that faith is alone when a sinner obtains acceptance with God. Can any man obtain the forgiveness of sins, who has not a broken spirit and a contrite heart? who has not a desire to flee from sin, and devote himself to the service of God? and will not such a desire be manifest by his life and conversation? So long as faith continues a solitary virtue, it is a dead faith; and by this no man living can be justified.

A very eminent Calvinistic divine, says the 'Papists distinguish 'sorrow for sin into two sorts; the first is contrition, which is a 'sorrow for sin arising from the apprehension of its natural filth, 'and its contrariety to the nature of God. The other is at- 'trition, which is any sorrow for sin arising from the apprehension 'of danger by sin. Now, though they enjoin the former, yet they 'maintain that a man dying with attrition, if attended with confession 'to the priest and absolution from him, will undoubtedly be saved. 'Does not such a venomous assertion as this open wide the flood 'gates of all manner of wickedness? We may lay it down as a 'certain mark, and a rule of judging from which we should never 'depart, that whatever doctrine or tenet serves to encourage idleness 'and sin, is perfectly false.'

So we believe: but if faith be alone as a solitary virtue, when a sinner obtains acceptance with God, then a man may be saved without either contrition or attrition; which is carrying the matter further from the truth, than the popish opinion, which the above writer so justly and severely reprobates.

It is true indeed that St. Paul in several passages only mentions faith, as the means of obtaining the divine favour; but to understand his meaning, we must consider how the matter is stated in other places. It is usual in scripture to express the whole of religion, by some one of its prominent branches; but in all such cases we are to remember that something is implied besides what is expressed. It is said, the *merciful* shall obtain mercy: the *humble* shall be exalted

to the divine favour: the *wise* shall inherit glory. It is said the mercy of the Lord is upon them that *fear* him: he that is *a doer of the word* shall be blessed in his deed: and the Lord has promised a crown to them that *love* him. In these passages faith is not mentioned; yet it is indisputably implied: for without faith it is impossible to please God. Therefore, when faith alone is mentioned as the means of obtaining the divine favour, by what rule of interpretation are we to conclude, that nothing else is to be understood? There is no place, where we might have expected the terms of a sinner's acceptance to be more explicitly stated, than when our Saviour appeared to the disciples after the resurrection, and opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures; and he said unto them, thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations. But in this passage which treats of justification, no mention is made of faith; yet could any man who has ever read the Bible, conclude from this, that repentance without faith could ever obtain the forgiveness of sins? How then can any person conclude, when faith alone is mentioned as obtaining pardon, that repentance likewise is not to be understood, and fruits meet for repentance? And if these are to be understood, then faith is never alone in a sinner's justification.

Our author objects, that Bishop Bull's notion, makes faith 'a principle which includes (not merely produces) works.'— It would seem by this, that the notion of faith *producing* works, might have been suffered to pass, if *including* them had been left out of the statement: but if he could allow the former, he did not need to scruple at the latter; for though in some cases there may be a wide difference between producing and including, yet in other cases there is little or no observable distinction. When producing is a necessary effect, there is including at the same time. The sun necessarily produces light; and hence in every proper description of the sun, light is included. In like manner genuine faith necessarily produces works; and therefore in every proper idea of faith, works are included; because faith without works is dead; and a dead faith can be of no avail in the justification of a sinner.

Our author may here plead, that he allows that faith produces works after justification; and he only objects to its doing this in any case, or in any degree, before that blessing is obtained. — This we understood to be his meaning, but where do the scriptures teach this doctrine? If faith never produce any works previous to justification, where do the fruits meet for repentance come from? Without these fruits we cannot obtain pardon; and if faith does not *produce* them, it must *include* them, which in his opinion is still more objectionable. We have to remind him, that genuine faith, though it may be weak in its commencement, yet it is of the same nature in every stage of its progress, and at every period it has an influence on the life and conversation; and it is no disparagement to it, to produce some degree of humility, contrition, and obedience to gospel precepts previous to justification; nor will it succeed any

worse on this account in obtaining acceptance. Can it be supposed, that our Saviour will reject a man from mercy, because he has broken off some of his iniquities previous to his justification, and tell him that because he has done this, he can never be forgiven, neither in this world nor that which is to come? If it is not the drift of our author to prove this, we do not know what he is wishing to prove. As far as we can understand him, he maintains, that the faith which procures our justification must be alone, unaccompanied with any other virtuous disposition, or exercise; otherwise the doctrine of free grace is trampled upon; and all the glory of the gospel annihilated: for if faith produce any instance of obedience to God, before pardon is obtained, it cannot be the faith that apprehends the Saviour and reserves all the glory to him. Let us then see how his notion of faith will operate in the ministry of the word.

The gospel was preached to the Corinthians, while they were thieves, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, fornicators, and idolators; and according to the notion contended for, those who preached the gospel had to tell them, that they must continue in the practice of all their crimes until they received justification: for if they refrained from a single act of drunkenness, theft, fornication, or idolatry, with any intention to do that which was lawful and right, they would be seeking to be saved by works: they would rob the Redeemer of his crown, and lay his honour in the dust. Strange as this may appear, if the notion contended for be correct, they could preach in no other way with any consistency. If their faith was to be alone, it could not be attended with any degree of repentance, or obedience whatever; they could not be required to break off one of their sins, till after they had obtained forgiveness. But we find the apostles did preach in a very different manner; they revealed the wrath of God from heaven against all unrighteousness of men; they admonished and exhorted them to forsake every evil way; to repent and turn to God that they might obtain mercy: and those who believed their report, and obeyed from the heart the good commandment delivered unto them, received forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who were sanctified.

Should our author plead, that he did not mean to assert, that other qualifications besides faith would prevent the pardon of sin; but only that nothing besides faith is requisite in order to obtain that blessing: it would be placing the argument on lower ground, but it would still leave us to inquire where such a doctrine as this was taught in any part of the scriptures? It is indeed admitted that the apostle in some passages, when speaking of justification, mentions nothing besides faith: yet in every instance, the person who exercises that faith, is understood to have other qualifications. And it has already been observed, that were we to draw our conclusions from detached passages, we might sometimes leave faith itself out of the question: for instance, it is written—If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In this confession, faith is to be understood; or otherwise it would contradict other express declarations of scripture. And by the same

rule of interpretation, where faith only is mentioned, other qualifications must be understood, or we shall set up one part of God's word in direct opposition to another: for it teaches that if a man does not forsake his sins, all the faith in the world will not save him.

Moreover, the apostle sometimes mentions other things besides faith, as being requisite in order to obtain acceptance with God. He says the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise — if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. In these words, the confession of Christ, is united with faith in obtaining the divine favour. And can it be supposed that a man can rightly confess his Saviour, who has not previously confessed his sins, with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart? In the very place where the apostle is treating of justification by faith, he says, whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Here prayer is shewn to be the means of obtaining mercy; and there are many requisites to acceptable prayer; one of which is mentioned by David when he says, if I regard iniquity in my heart God will not hear my prayer: and before the heart can be brought off from regarding iniquity, it has to engage in various exercises, and severe struggles, all of which are works, in a theological sense: as we read of the work of faith, and the labour of love. Consequently, when the apostle only mentions faith, we are not to suppose that he is contradicting all he has advanced in other places.

Our author affirms, that Bishop Bull's notion of faith, *clothes works with merit sufficient to cover all sin and justify before God.* — This is a dreadful charge indeed: but how does the truth of it appear? Is it supported by any evidence or countenanced by any probability? Can a person, under no circumstances, plead for obedience to Gospel precepts, without clothing that obedience with sufficient merit to cover all sin, and render forgiveness unnecessary? We understood, that the merit of human works was decidedly renounced by all Protestants; though they still contend for obedience to God. And if there be no merit in the work of faith, how is it that a man cannot obey in some other respects, without being so abundantly meritorious? If mercy be promised on condition of confessing and forsaking sin, how is it that these conditions cannot be complied with, without accumulating any offensive merit? If men, after they have obtained mercy, can walk in God's commandments, without having any merit due to themselves, how does it come to pass that merit is so inseparably attached to every act of obedience previous to justification? We should certainly have supposed, that if there was no real merit in one case, there might possibly be none in the other. And so it appears the person thought, against whom the charge before us is brought; for our author states a few lines before, that 'Bishop Bull utterly renounces all merit in works, and 'insists that no obedience can be rendered without the aid of the 'spirit.' Yet in the face of this declaration, he charges him with clothing works with sufficient merit to cover all sin, and justify before God: and leaves that charge without the shadow of a proof, or

any attempt at explanation. Must not St. Paul be greatly obligated to such a defender of his doctrine?

'*By the Bishop's mode of statement,*' says our author, '*justification* '*by faith is indeed held in words, but the real doctrine is lost: it is* '*in reality justification by works.*' Justification by *works!* and that in *reality!* Surely by this tremendous charge he intends to strike us dumb; and to strike so effectually that he will have no need to repeat the blow: his design is to render our opinion the object of universal abhorrence and disgust. When he brands our doctrine with, '*justification by works,*' he is well aware that he writes upon its forehead, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH: that he is in *reality* pronouncing our system the habitation of devils; and the hold of every foul spirit; and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Where shall we find a refuge, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall? If we stand our ground, it must be by remembering, that many a dreadful charge falls to the ground when it comes to be examined; and what is pronounced a great fault, may turn out to be a real excellence. Of our Redeemer, his enemies said by way of reproach, this man receiveth sinners: yet this was true in one sense, and in that respect it was worthy of the highest commendation. And when we maintain, that a sinner must have other qualifications besides faith, when he obtains acceptance with God, it may not be justification by works, in any unscriptural sense of the word.—The charge of justification by works might have been brought against our Saviour, when he said, If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will forgive you—Seek and ye shall find; knock and the door shall be opened. The charge might have been brought against St. Paul, when he said, Faith works by love; and love is the fulfilling of the law. The same charge might have been brought against St. James, when he said, you see how a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. When these things are considered the charge will appear less terrific; and we may venture to meet it without dismay.

St. Paul and St. James do not use the same terms, when they speak of justification; the former says, Abraham was justified by faith; the latter says he was justified by works. And if we can reconcile them together, without sacrificing one at the shrine of the other, we may be led to see that there is a sense in which faith and works are not incompatible, in a sinner's justification: that they do not in every sense of the word necessarily exclude each other. When St. Paul says a man is justified by faith, we may presume, that he does not exclude works of every description; and when St. James speaks of justification by works, he includes faith: so that they agreed in sentiment, and only differed in expression, on account of the circumstances in which they were placed, and the different ends they were seeking to accomplish.

It is to be rememberd that St. Paul, on the article of justification, had to contend with the Jews, who had a strong aversion to the abolition of the old, and the introduction of the new dispensation;

they thought the law of Moses, including its rites and ceremonies, was a perfect and an exclusive way of salvation: and that by keeping its precepts, and observing its institutions, they could merit eternal life. And they declared that the happiness obtained as the reward of their own obedience, was far greater and much more magnificent, than that which was given in the way of mercy and grace. On this account, the doctrine of the cross, was to them a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. After some of them had taken up a profession of the gospel, they still maintained, that except men were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved: for they were persuaded, that under the gospel, justification was to be obtained by their own merits, and that they were still to retain their former ritual observances. To rectify these errors and abuses, the apostle told them that men were to be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. If they persisted in their dependance on the law, he reminded them, that it was not the hearers of the law, but the doers of it, who were justified before God.— And as they had violated its precepts, they were to remember that no future obedience could take away past transgressions: consequently the only way in which they could be justified, was by the remission of sins; obtained through grace and favour. In which way even Abraham himself obtained acceptance with God. For, if Abraham, he says, was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory.— That is, if he obtained acceptance by the merit of his own works, as you vainly expect to do, he might have boasted of his own performances; as his reward would have been received, not of grace but of debt. But even in his case all boasting was excluded; for his justification was an act of special favour; as it is written, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. Therefore, says the apostle, we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.— Most evidently Abraham was justified without the Mosaic law, on which they placed so much dependance, for that law was not then in existence; and it was without the merit of any legal observances whatever; for he received his acceptance by special favour. It was by faith that it might be by grace; and if it was by grace, it could not be by works, in the way the Jews were contending for: which was that of meriting their own acceptance: for had it been by works in this sense of the word, it could not have been by grace. In this manner the apostle spake to the Jews and judaising teachers, in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians, to rectify their notions about the law of Moses, and the method of a sinner's acceptance with God. Even when Peter was giving countenance to Jewish rites and ceremonies, he withstood him to the face, and said,— if thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. In this place it is evident that the works of the ceremonial law are intended; for these were the only works which Peter had relinquished, when he became a Chris-

tian. But we need not confine St. Paul's meaning in every place to the ceremonial law, for he might say that no man could be justified by the works of the moral law, because all have broken that law, and can make no satisfaction for past offences: they are not able to yield perfect obedience, and there is no merit in their best performances. In one or other of these senses, the apostle is always to be understood, when he says we cannot be justified by works. He never intimates, that a person may receive pardon, while he continues to live in wilful sin; to neglect all religious duties and spiritual exercises; for it was his uniform design to induce men to obey the gospel, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness which are to the praise and glory of God. He invariably prescribed the same rule of life to such as were seeking the divine favour, as he did to those who had obtained it: and therefore when he excluded works from justification, he could never intend it to be understood, that a man might obtain pardon without any act of gospel obedience.

St. James lived to see, that some wrested St. Paul's doctrine of faith without works, to their own destruction. At that early period there were some ranting Antinomians, who maintained they were under no obligation to obey the precepts of the gospel, because they were to be saved by faith alone: a faith which they supposed they might possess without any holiness of heart or life: for if they were to be saved by grace it was no more of works; otherwise grace was no more grace. They understood grace to be a discharge from all moral obligation. But in order to recover them out of this snare of the devil, and to prevent others from falling into it, St. James declared, that faith without obedience could never answer the purpose of man's salvation. He says,— So speak ye and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy. What doth it profit, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

St. James would most likely find, that the men he was contending with, were wiser in their own conceit, than seven men who could render a reason; and they would plead what St. Paul says of Abraham, that he was justified by faith without works. And it is true that he was justified without works, in one sense but not in another; he was justified without those works for which the Romans and Galatians were contending, when St. Paul wrote his epistles to them; but he was not justified without moral obedience; for he feared God and obeyed his commandments before he obtained a sense of his acceptance with God. Hence, St. James takes up this case and says, Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. Ye see then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

From the above, we see that justification by works, in one sense of the word, which our author brings as an insurmountable objection against the scheme of Bishop Bull, is no more than what St. James plainly declares and expressly asserts. And allowing that he means evangelical obedience, and that St. Paul by works means legal observances, then they will be found to agree in sentiment: but if St. Paul be made to exclude every act of gospel obedience from a sinner's justification, these two apostles can never be reconciled.

A numerous class of divines, determined at all events to exclude every act of obedience from justification, have devised various methods to reconcile the two apostles. Some say Paul speaks of the cause, and James of the effect of justification: the former shews how we are justified; the latter how we make it manifest. One is said to speak of forgiveness of sin; the other of acquittance from hypocrisy. It is said one speaks of the office, the other of the quality of faith. It is stated by others, that Paul pleads for saving faith; and James against a naked assent: that one is to be understood of the justification of our persons; the other of the justification of our faith. But these and similar methods, throw no light on the subject. The scripture cannot be explained by the dexterity of evasion, nor by the boldness of contradiction.

What is very frequently pleaded is, that James is only to be understood of the evidence of works; but this brings the two apostles no nearer together; for if the evidence of works be necessary to justification, works themselves must be so likewise: for there can be no evidence of works, where works have no existence. But it is pleaded that works are only the evidence of our faith: but if so we must have those works, which afford that evidence before we can be justified. To remove this difficulty, it is said the apostles speak of different justifications; one of which we receive in the day of conversion, the other at the great day of accounts: but this cannot be proved; and if it could, it would not answer the purpose; unless we are justified before God on a different principle at one time, from what we are at another; and this is not what the scriptures teach. If we shall be justified at the bar of God, it will be by the grace that will be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ: it will be because we obtain mercy of the Lord in that day; and in this respect it is the same in the present life. If any kind of works be needful in one justification, they must be so in the other, for the Almighty is of one mind.

It is further asserted, that James speaks only of a justification before men, which cannot be obtained without works. But it is evident James speaks of justification, as a subject of great importance; and to understand him of a justification before men only, would set him at variance with St. Paul, who speaks of such a justification as being comparatively of very little moment; where he says, With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment: for he that judges me is the Lord. If it had been James' drift to prove, that believers must be justified by their actions before the world, he would scarcely have selected that case of Abraham

which none witnessed but his son Isaac. Besides, it is allowed that James was contending with those who asserted, they could be saved by faith without any good works; and what purpose could it have answered, to tell them they could not be justified before men without such works, if he had admitted at the same time, that they could be justified before God without them? This would have been granting his opponents what they were contending for.— Moreover, he says, what doth it profit, if a man say he hath faith and have not works? can faith save him? — By this it is manifest that he was not speaking of a justification before men only; but of one connected with eternal salvation, and consequently of a justification before God.

There were two occasions on which Abraham was justified; one before Isaac was born, the other when he was offered on the altar; but both these instances constitute the premises from which James draws this conclusion,—Ye see how that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. If he had only alluded to the latter instance, he could never have proved that faith without works was dead, nor that a man cannot be saved without them: for Abraham had certainly a living faith at the first, and was in a state of salvation the moment he was justified.— Both the apostles quote the same passage, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness; consequently they both speak of the same justification, namely, that which is before God. The only way therefore in which they can be reconciled, is to allow that they spake of different works, which for the sake of distinction, we may call one Jewish, and the other Christian: St. Paul uses the word in the former sense, and shews that without such works Abraham was justified: St. James uses the word in the latter sense, for such obedience as the fear of God produces, and shews that Abraham was not destitute of works of this description when he was justified by faith, and established this point, that a naked faith can never obtain justification. In this way the apostles are made to harmonize; and we may add, in this way only.

Doddridge, who was generally very judicious, when speaking on the subject before us, says, 'I am surprised at the immense pains com-
'mentators have taken to reconcile St. Paul and St. James; and the
'many hypothesises they have formed for that purpose. Whereas
'to me nothing is more evident, than that the ideas they affix to the
'words *faith* and *works*, are entirely different. St. James by the
'word faith, means simply an assent to the truth of religious princi-
'ples, without determining whether it be, or be not, effectual: and
'then declares, that in case this assent does not produce good works,
'that is, the solid virtues of heart and life, it cannot be accepted by
'God; whereas St. Paul by the word faith, means a cordial and vital
'assent to divine truth, which influences the heart to a holy temper,
'and according to the gracious terms of the gospel, entitles a man
'to divine acceptance, without any regard at all to the Mosaic law,
'and previous to the production of any of those good works which
'will naturally be the fruit of it. Had Luther calmly considered this,
'he would not have denied the inspiration of St. James.'— How this commentator came to suppose, that he had reconciled the two apos-

tles, we cannot understand. That the apostles, as he asserts, had entirely different ideas of faith, does not appear; for they both speak of a faith by which we are to be saved; and of the faith of Abraham which was counted to him for righteousness; and therefore if their ideas were in any degree correct, they could not be entirely different. And it is to be remembered that it is not what they say about faith, but what they say about works, which constitutes the difficulty.

He says the two apostles affix entirely different ideas to the word *works:* so we believe and contend; but even here the commentator fails egregiously, by not pointing out the difference between their ideas of works, and by treating the subject as if they both spake of the same works. He says Paul speaks of a faith that entitles a man to divine acceptance, previous to the production of any of those good works which will naturally be the fruit of it. And if Paul had these works in view which are the fruit of faith, when he says we are saved not of works lest any man should boast, then he must be speaking of the same works which James speaks of; and how does this make them agree?

As Doddridge affirms that faith produces no good fruit before justification, we ask where he learned this? It was not from St. Paul, nor from any other inspired writer. If faith as he himself properly defines it, be a vital assent to divine truth, which influences the heart to a holy temper; how can it be supposed to be without fruit at any period of its existence? What are the truths which faith has to assent unto? Is not one of them this, that we have been guilty of those things which bring the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience? and must we not resolve to break off those sins, before we can accept of Christ as a Saviour? and is not this fruit which faith brings forth before justification? The apostle says; He that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. This coming unto God, by those who desire to be reconciled unto him, must include a ceasing to do evil, and a learning to do well, in some degree at least; and this coming unto God is previous to acceptance; consequently faith produces some fruit previous to justification. And if St. James speaks of those works which are the fruits of faith; and St. Paul only excludes those works which belonged to the Jewish law, then we can see how they agree together on the article of justification.

The late Dr. Dwight, has devoted a discourse to the subject before us, in which he says, — 'Some divines, among whom was the first 'President Edwards, have taught, that St. James speaks of justifi- 'cation in the sight of men only, while St. Paul speaks of justification 'in the sight of God. This I think cannot be a just opinion. It is 'plain from the 21–23 verses, that St. James speaks of the same 'justification which Abraham received, and in which his faith was 'counted to him for righteousness. It is also evident from the 14th 'verse, in the question, Can faith save him? From this it is plain, 'that St. James had his eye upon the justification to which salvation 'is annexed.' — 'Others, and among them Poole, (whose comment on 'this chapter is excellent,) supposes that St. Paul speaks of justifi-

'cation properly so called; and St. James of the manifestation, or 'proof of that justification. That, in this sense, the apostles are 'perfectly reconciled, I am ready to admit; but am inclined to doubt 'whether this is the sense, in which St James is really to be under-'stood.'

On the above we have merely to remark, that Edwards and Poole are here introduced, as each giving a different opinion on the subject; and to the latter, Dwight gives the preference. He is certain that Edwards is wrong, for several reasons which are stated; and he is inclined to doubt whether the excellent comment of Poole has given the sense, in which St. James is to be understood.— But by the slightest inspection it may be seen, that both these authors were of the same opinion on the subject: they only differed in expression. Edwards' justification before God, was Poole's justification properly so called; and Edwards' justification in the sight of men, was Poole's manifestation or proof of justification. He has fully confuted the opinion of Edwards; and of course it equally applies to that of Poole.

Having exploded the views of former divines, he proceeds to state his own as follows: 'I now assert, that both apostles speak of 'the same justification, that which is before God; and that they are 'perfectly harmonious in holding the doctrine of justification by faith 'without works.' This would be quite sufficient for his purpose, if the assertion was supported by any adequate proof, but in this respect he totally fails. His drift, like that of many others, is to make the meaning of James be the reverse of what he expressed; when he said Abraham was justified by works, he meant only that he was justified without them; which is a greater degradation to the Apostle, than to deny his inspiration. However he speaks more consistently towards the conclusion, when he says, 'This case put 'by St. James is a clear proof, that we are not justified either partially 'or wholly, by works, in the common meaning of that phraseology; 'and that the true doctrine of St. James is no other, than that we 'are not justified by a speculative belief which is without works; but 'by the faith of the gospel which worketh by love?'— This we think approaches near the truth; but is not sufficiently explicit; nor properly adapted to the author's purpose. He states that the doctrine of St. James is that we are not justified by a belief without works. And if a man cannot be justified without works, what is the Doctor disputing about? or what doth his arguing prove?— We are not, he says, justified by works in the *common meaning* of that phraseology. Does not this concede the point in dispute, by admitting that there is a sense in which we are justified by works? though that is not the common acceptation of the words: yet a sense that may be properly used, as our Saviour himself did when he said, by thy works shalt thou be justified. Thus the Doctor, like many others on this subject, labours in vain, and spends his strength for nought: by giving to St. Paul's words, *justification without works*, a sense which they were never intended to bear, and with which the words of St. James can never be reconciled.

Justification by faith and not by works, is an important and pre-

cious truth; yet a truth that may be mistaken and abused: hence we take up this position, that justification without works, is not true in every sense of the word. Against this position our opponents bring up all their heavy battering train, to level it with the ground, and not leave one stone upon another; and not content with demolishing the building, they seem wishful to devote the place where it stood, to utter destruction; and to pronounce a curse on the man who shall again attempt to raise up the gates, or lay another stone for a foundation. If they would stop even here we should know what to make of them; but after they have exploded the idea, that justification is by works in any sense whatever; they are so inconsistent as to build again the things they have destroyed.

That celebrated divine, Bishop Hopkins, in his work on the two covenants, brings all the stores of his capacious mind to prove, that justification is not by works in any sense whatever; and at the conclusion, labours to reconcile the two apostles on this subject. The Bishop, like all writers on that side of the question, makes St. Paul say, that we are justified by faith *only*: but if the phrase justified by faith, and by faith *only*, are of the same signification, there is no need of the additional term alone; and if they are not of the same signification, it is taking a very unjustifiable liberty with the apostle's language: with this remark we proceed to give the Bishop's statement, who says, 'The great place, most urged and insisted on for 'justification by works, is James, chap. ii. from 14th verse to the end; 'especially verse 24, Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, 'and not by faith only. Here the grand difficulty is, how we shall 'reconcile St. Paul, asserting that we are justified by faith only, 'without works, with St. James' affirming we are justified by 'works and not by faith only.— To this I answer: that there is no 'opposition at all between the two apostles. For St. Paul only 'excludes works from being the way and means of our justification; 'and St. James only excludes that faith which is without works. 'St. Paul disputes against legalists and self-justiciaries, who trusted 'in their own works to justify them; and against them he lays down 'this conclusion, that it is faith, and not works, that doth justify: 'but St. James disputes against the Gnostics and Libertines, who 'trusted to an outward and fruitless profession of faith, or rather 'indeed to a vain fancy instead of faith; and, against them, he lays 'down this conclusion, that not by faith only, but by works, a man is 'justified. St. Paul's scope is, to shew by what we are justified; and 'that, he tells us, is by faith: St. James' scope is to shew what kind 'of faith that is, which must justify us; not an empty faith, but such 'as is productive of good works. What doth it profit, though a 'man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? 'Thus you see St. Paul and St. James fully accorded about this 'doctrine of justification by faith. St. Paul affirms, that it is faith 'alone that justifies; St. James denies, that a lonely faith can justify: 'and we assent to both as true; for the faith, which alone justifies 'us, is not a lonely or solitary faith, but accompanied and attended 'by good works.'

The statement which the Bishop here gives contains some useful and important truths; but it does not reconcile the two apostles; nor does it agree with some of his former discussions. He says, 'There is this difference in the two covenants, the covenant of works 'promises life if we obey in our own persons, but the covenant of grace, 'if we obey in our surety. The condition of both is perfect obedience; 'in the one, personal; in the other, imputed: the obedience and satis-'faction of another, apprehended and applied to us by our believing.'

According to this scheme there can be no necessity for personal obedience; and how this agrees with what is stated above to be the sense of St James is what we cannot imagine.

At some times the Bishop is so determined on excluding all kind of works from justification, that he will not allow faith to be called a work. He says 'if faith justify us as a work, then the apostle has very incongruously opposed him that worketh, to him that believeth: — To him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is counted to him for righteousness.' His opposition to having faith called a work, is the more remarkable, as the scripture expressly speaks of the work of faith; and says, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. If he thought that faith could not be called a work, without making Paul's opposition between faith and works incongruous, then in his opinion, works of every description for the same reason must be excluded from a sinner's justification; and if St. Paul is thus to be understood, he can never be made to agree with St. James, who says by works a man is justified and not by faith only. The meaning of which he says is this, that the faith which justifies is not solitary but accompanied by good works. The manner in which he here interprets St. James can never agree with the sense he has previously given to the words of St. Paul. To make the two apostles agree, he must be at variance with himself, and acknowledge that by him that worketh not, St. Paul does not mean a person destitute of all obedience whatever.

To this it is objected, 'That to interpret St. Paul by St. James 'involves this manifest absurdity, that it is interpreting a writer who 'treats professedly, and in a set discourse, on the subject in question, 'by a writer who does it but incidentally. This itself makes it clear, 'that the principle of this doctrine, must be first sought for in the 'writer who enters professedly, and by copious argument into the 'inquiry.' This writer, like a numerous class of divines, is decided that James is to be reconciled to Paul, and not Paul to James; but what is the reason of this? were they not both equally possessed of divine inspiration? was not James the elder apostle, and invested with superior authority in the church at Jerusalem? — The rule here laid down, of being guided by a writer who treats professedly on a subject, in preference to one who does it incidentally, is very proper when applied to authors of no more than human authority; but it loses much of its force, if it has any at all, when applied to such as wrote by the inspiration of God. Be this as it may, we altogether deny that St. James wrote incidentally on the subject before us: he wrote on it as professedly, and as much in a set discourse as

St. Paul did: it was the leading design of his whole epistle. The argument drawn from his writing incidentally is a baseless supposition, and no other reason is assigned for reconciling him to St. Paul. Which of these writers ought to be reconciled to the other, can only be determined by subjecting what they have written to the analogy of faith. St. James on this subject advances nothing peculiar to himself; his sentiments are supported by innumerable passages of scripture, and the whole tenor of divine truth: and he is consistent throughout. But St. Paul, on the question at issue, uses a phraseology peculiar to himself, and the sense which is put upon his words is inconsistent with his other writings, where he speaks too plainly to be misunderstood. So that what is called reconciling him to St. James, is no more than what is absolutely requisite in order to reconcile him to himself.

If St. James had never wrote his epistle the case would have stood exactly as it does now; and we should have been obliged to allow that St. Paul did not exclude every kind of works from a sinner's acceptance with God; or we should have made him contradict himself, and oppose the whole stream of divine revelation. Therefore, when he says justification is obtained by him that worketh not, but believeth, we are to understand him with some degree of limitation. We must apply the same rule of interpretation to his words, that we have to do to a multitude of other passages. Our Saviour, for instance, says, Labour not for the meat that perishes; but for that which endureth to eternal life. This would be understood, and was a suitable admonition to those who followed him, not because they saw his miracles, but because they eat of the loaves and were filled. But if the indolent, from this injunction, should plead exemption from all earthly labour, we should have to remind them, that the apostle says, This we commanded, that if any would not work neither should he eat. And thus we should reconcile Christ to St. Paul. And why are we not to apply this rule to the words of the apostle, when the nature of the subject imperiously demands it? When he says we are justified without works, we are under the necessity of understanding him with some limitation; as we shall demonstrate by two considerations, each of which completely answers the purpose.

The first is the case of Abraham, introduced by the apostle where he treats of justification, and says, Where is boasting, then? it is excluded. By what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. To this opinion the Jews were strongly opposed; but to give them a decided proof of it, the apostle refers to the case of Abraham, who believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. The case of this patriarch is thus brought forward as a decisive evidence, that a man is justified by faith and not by works: he was then without works in the way the apostle was contending for, or he could not have been produced as an example. But was Abraham at that time destitute of good works in every sense of the word? Is it pos-

sible the apostle could think so, or either desire or expect any of the Jews to think so?

When Abraham was seventy-five years old he was called by the Almighty to leave his own country and proceed to Canaan, and there to become the founder and pattern of revealed religion: and in him all the families of the earth were to be blessed. And if he had lived so many years in the world without any act of divine worship or moral obedience, it is not likely that he would have been such a distinguished favourite of heaven. After he had commenced his pilgrimage he lived in the fear of the Lord, and was uniformly in the practice of piety and devotion; wherever he pitched his tent, he builded an altar and called on the name of the Lord. His eminent piety was acknowledged by Melchizedek, King of Salem and Priest of the most high God; and who, in virtue of his office, gave him his benediction, saying, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth. After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. All these things transpired before he had that promise of a son and a numerous offspring, when he believed the Lord and it was counted to him for righteousness. Could the apostle therefore intend to declare, that Abraham was at that time destitute of all good works? But let us hear the apostle's own words on the subject, he says, By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, *obeyed;* and went out, not knowing whither he went. Hence we see that it is utterly impossible, that the apostle is to be understood, that Abraham was destitute of all moral obedience, when he was justified by faith.

The next subject for our consideration is the case of St. Paul himself. The works without which he declares a believer to be justified, were such as he himself in some sense had abandoned, when he embraced the gospel. When speaking of what he had been, and of the change which had taken place, he says — I was circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; and according to the strictest sect of their religion, I lived a Pharisee: touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him not having on mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. — He once highly valued his privileges as a Jew, and the righteousness obtained by observing the precepts and expiations of the law; but when he embarked with Christ, for the harbour of eternal felicity, he threw those things overboard, and did not regret their loss; for all his dependence now was on that righteousness of God which is obtained through faith. He had not the least desire nor expectation to find acceptance by the works of the law: he was become one of those that worketh not,

but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly. Here the question is, what kind of works did the apostle abandon when he became a Christian? He had no doubt given up all ritual observances; and all his dependance on keeping moral precepts. But did he throw away all the real virtues of heart and life? Did he divest himself of every vestige of piety, that he might live without any act of obedience or worship? Did he no more abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul? Did he resolve no more to speak truth with his neighbour; nor ever to keep a conscience void of any offence, towards either God or man? No one can imagine that he did? But if he did not renounce works of this description, when he embraced the faith of the gospel, then he did not include them when he said, believers were justified without the deeds of the law: nor when he said, To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness.

How did he conduct himself, when he became one of those that worketh not? He received his convictions on the road to Damascus; and he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to *do?* And afterwards, before he obtained peace with God, he spent three days and three nights in penitence and prayer. During that period, would he not be more devout and spiritually minded than he had ever been before? more averse to sin, and better disposed to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, than at any former period? Doddridge, in his paraphrase on these words, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* says, 'For instead of carrying 'my mad opposition any further, I with all humility resign myself 'entirely to thy disposal, and humbly wait the intimations of thy 'sacred pleasure, determined to submit to whatsoever thou wilt order 'me. He was *three days without sight,* and during that time he saw 'some extraordinary visions, and the remainder of it he employed in 'such deep humiliations, and humble, earnest prayer, as suited his 'past guilt and his present astonishing circumstances.' Thus we see how a man is engaged when he ceaseth from works. When he abandons the works of the law, he does not refrain from gospel exercises; when he is one that worketh not in the Jewish sense of the word, he is employed in deep humiliation, and humble, earnest prayer. And therefore we see that a man must have works of some description, when he obtains justification by faith.

In those epistles, where the apostle establishes the doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law, he strongly urges the people to gospel obedience; to walk after the spirit and bring forth its fruits; to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which was their reasonable service. If it be pleaded that this was after their justification: we reply, that it is not certain that all the persons to whom these words were addressed, were in a justified state: but if they were so, is not the same Christian walk and conversation enjoined on both these classes; are they not to walk by the same rule, and mind the same things?

It will be admitted that people may be convinced of sin, and have an earnest concern for their salvation, a considerable time before

their acceptance with God: and during the interval how are they to conduct themselves? Must not they endeavour to deny themselves of all ungodliness, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world? Are not those who feel their need of divine mercy, directed to seek that they may find? And in what way is this mercy to be sought? Is it to be by running into all their former excesses? by having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness? by walking according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which works in the hearts of the children of disobedience? No one will venture to say this, who has any regard for the bible. The way those are to walk, who are seeking mercy, is to turn from their evil ways; to use the means of grace; and keep themselves separate from sin and sinners. As it is written, Come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. And if such as are convinced of sin, are to seek the Lord in a religious course of life, in self-denial, and in devotional exercises, then it follows that they are not justified by faith without some other qualification; which is the only point we are now contending for: and it is a point that may be proved from St. Paul, as well as from St. James; and consequently he does not exclude works of every kind from a sinner's justification: those who maintain that he does, turn his writings into the most palpable contradictions.

Notwithstanding our notice of some others, we have not lost sight of Mr. Bickersteth; who will allow of no qualification besides faith in a sinner's justification: against those who plead for faith to be accompanied with gospel obedience, he maintains that in such a case, 'The faith by which we are justified, is not the principle that appre-'hends the Saviour, and secures the exclusive glory to him.' — To this we reply, that faith is not the less genuine for being accompanied with other gracious dispositions and exercises; it is not the less availing, for being exercised by a person who is humble and contrite; and who has for some time been labouring to break off his iniquities, and do that which is lawful and right; and who may have in a measure succeeded. And we may add, that it is only by such a person that saving faith can be exercised, for a person must see and feel his need of a saviour, and cordially approve of his terms of salvation, before he can properly rely on his merits and grace. It is a living faith only that can apprehend the Saviour, so as to receive him; and there can be no living faith without gospel obedience; for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also: and can neither bring a blessing to the sinner, nor any glory to the Saviour. We would have our author to know, that gospel obedience takes away no glory from Christ; it is by transgression and not by obedience that we dishonour his holy name. He says, herein is my Father glorified that ye bring forth much fruit: and if our obedience glorify the Father, it will glorify the Son. Does not our author practice obedience himself, and inculcate it upon others, and at the

same time disclaim all merit in human actions? and if there be no merit in obedience after justification, how can it be supposed that there is any in it before; when that obedience is less uniform, and more imperfect? Our obedience, to whatever extent it might be carried, can never take away the least particle of our past transgressions; this can only be done by Christ; and therefore our salvation is to be ascribed entirely to the praise of the glory of his grace. The apostle says, that Christ became the author of eternal salvation to them that *obey* him. It appears from this that men must obey before they can be saved: but this obedience, though indispensably requisite, makes no deduction from the honour of the Saviour's grace, because there is no merit in this obedience, and it springs from the gracious influence of his holy spirit; and this applies as much to that obedience which precedes, as to that which follows our justification. It therefore takes away no glory from Christ, to affirm, that he only pardons those who repent and do works meet for repentance. Those who represent him justifying sinners in any other way, make him the minister of sin; the high priest of antinomianism; which is a glory he does not admire, and with which he will not suffer himself to be invested.

From what source, does our author derive the notion of a barren faith apprehending the Saviour? It is not to be found in the new testament; for there, obedience and saving faith are so identified as to be inseparable; and are often used as equivalent terms. St. Paul calls the belief of the gospel, the obedience of faith. And when he says all have not obeyed the gospel, he confirms it by the prophet who says, Who hath believed our report? But if faith did not include obedience, the prophet's declaration that they did not believe the gospel, would not have proved that they did not obey it.— The apostle affirms that Christ is the Saviour of them that *believe;* and he intends the same thing when he says, Christ became the author of eternal salvation to them that *obey* him. He says neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love: and in the same sense he says, circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing: but keeping the commandments of God.

In like manner unbelief and disobedience are often used to denote the same thing, and are put one for the other. The unbelieving will have their portion in the lake of fire; for Christ will take vengeance on them that obey not the gospel. Disobedience is made the opposite of faith in these words, Unto you therefore who *believe* he his precious; but unto them which be *disobedient*, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner. The apostle declares that the Jews fell by unbelief; and he cautions Christians against falling after the same example of disobedience. In this passage Heb. iv. 11, the word rendered unbelief signifies disobedience, and is so rendered Eph. ii. 2; v. 6; Col. iii. 6. Our Saviour says, He that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life; he that *obeyeth* not the Son shall not see life; John iii. 36.—Doddridge renders it, *He that is disobedient to the Son*, and says, 'I think it of

'great importance to preserve a difference in the translation, corres-
'pondent to that in the original; because the latter phrase explains
'the former, and shews that the *faith* to which the promise of life is
'annexed, is a principle of sincere and unreserved *obedience;* and it
'is impossible to make one part of scripture consistent with another,
'unless this be taken into our idea of saving faith.' And if, in order to make one part of scripture consistent with another, obedience must be taken into the idea of saving faith, then that faith without obedience, which some dream of as apprehending the Saviour, has no real existence; it is the mere phantom of a vain imagination.

Dr. Dwight, in his discourse to reconcile St. James and St. Paul, says, 'When we confide ourselves to Christ, we do it according to
'his own terms. Among these he has required us to do all things
'whatsoever he hath commanded us; and to walk as he also walked.
'When, therefore, we confide in Christ, we surrender ourselves into
'his hands with a fixed intention, a cordial choice of universal obedi-
'ence, as to our whole future conduct.'

Here we ask, is it to be supposed, that any man attains such a state as this, before he has performed any religious exercise? Be that as it may, the state here described is previous to acceptance with God; and it includes various qualifications besides faith. If when we confide in Christ, as the writer above affirms, we must surrender ourselves into his hands with a fixed intention, a cordial choice of universal obedience, then works of some description are indispensably requisite, and conducive to our justification, which is admitting in other words all we contend for.

The point in dispute might be brought within a small compass, by a reference to christian experience. When the heart is changed by grace, there is always a corresponding change of conduct; and the question is, whether God ever pardons sin without a previous change of heart: if he does, then justification is without works in every sense of the word: but if he never does pardon a sinner without a previous change of heart, then none are justified without those works which that change produces. In this dispute we are willing to stand or fall with this assertion, that the Almighty never did, nor ever will pardon a sinner without some previous change of heart. Let the reader consult his own experience, and all the cases which ever came under his observation, and likewise those of which he has either heard or read, in any age or nation, and we are confident he will not find a single instance, of any person being justified in the sight of God, before grace had produced some change in his heart. To that man will God look who is poor, of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at his word: but he never looks with complacency and delight on the un-humbled, hard-hearted sinner, who is persisting in his crimes.

How were the Corinthians brought into a state of acceptance? the apostle says they were washed, they were sanctified, they were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God. They were in some measure sanctified or made holy, before they were justified. This invariably is, and of necessity must be the case with every person brought into a state of acceptance with God.

Otherwise, men would obtain this blessing before they desired it, and before ever they had felt an earnest concern for their salvation: but in this way no man living can be justified.

Before this blessing is obtained, there is the bitter remembrance of past sins, which fills the soul with wormwood and gall; there is a resolution to forsake sin; and an earnest desire to know, and to do the will of God. Where repentance is recommended, it is written, —Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: that which I see not, teach thou me; If I have done iniquity, I will do no more. — These words, Matthew Henry improves as follows: 'Whatever thou shalt discover to me 'to have been amiss, by thy grace I will amend it for the future. 'The penitent here completes his repentance; for it is not enough 'to be sorry for our sins, but we must go, and sin no more; and, as 'here, bind ourselves with the bond of a fixed resolution never more 'to return to folly. This is meet to be said in a steadfast purpose, 'and meet to be said to God in a solemn promise and vow.' We ask, are not several works here mentioned and many others implied, which are requisite in order to obtain acceptance with God? In reference to such spiritual exercises, we may say with St. James, Ye see how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

'Those distinctions,' says an eminent divine, 'which are commonly 'applied to the discourse of St. James, do not clear it, but contradict 'the express design of it. Some say faith justifies without works; 'but faith without works does not justify. But St. James says 'expressly, that we are justified by works. How then is it true that 'faith justifies without works? Some say faith justifies the person; 'and works justify the faith. But what ground for this, when the 'text speaks expressly of the *person* being justified? Was not 'Abraham our father justified by works?'

In maintaining that any degree of gospel obedience is to precede justification, we are opposed by Archbishop Tillotson: and we know of no man who was ever better able to manage an argument: let us therefore hear him on this subject. In his 209th sermon, when speaking of St. Paul, he says, 'Whenever he contends that we are 'justified by faith without works, he denies one of these three things '— 1, That the observation of the law of Moses is necessary to our 'salvation. 2, He denies the merit of any obedience, to gain the 'favour and acceptance of God. 3, He denies the necessity of any 'works of righteousness, antecedently to our first justification, and 'being received into a state of grace and favour with God. In which 'sense he says, that God justifies the ungodly upon their believing. 'So that whatever sins they were guilty of before, and though they never did any one good action in their lives, yet if they sincerely embrace the Christian religion, and engage to obey the precepts of the gospel for the future, God will receive them into his favour, and pardon the sins of their former lives. Not by acts of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saveth us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy 'Ghost.'

In reply to this, we assert, that the two passages of scripture here brought into view, do not prove the point for which they are produced; they do not prove that a man is justified before he has done any one good action: and no other proof is attempted to be given. The former passage is, 'God justifies the ungodly:' which the apostle pleads was the manner of Abraham's justification; yet considering the circumstances of the case, he could not intend us to suppose that Abraham was justified before he performed one act of obedience to God. The term ungodly may be applied to all who formerly lived in sin and have not received forgiveness, though they may then have a work of grace in their hearts, preparatory to their acceptance. Whenever justification stands in the pardon of sin, it is the justification of the ungodly: but that does not imply that those who are justified continue in the practice of all their crimes, up to the moment of their acceptance with God. The apostle, long after his conversion, styles himself the chief of sinners, but we are not from this to suppose that he was then living in the practice of sin; or that he had forsaken none of his sins before he was pardoned; and therefore we are not to suppose that he spake in this sense, when he asserted that God justifies the ungodly.

The other passage, 'Not by acts of righteousness, &c.,' proves no more than this, that our own obedience is not the meritorious cause of our justification. It does not prove that we are neither to have repentance, nor reformation, before we obtain forgiveness. This passage states, that we are saved by mercy: but the mercy offered to sinners is on stipulated conditions; such as, Let the wicked forsake his way; and without a compliance with these conditions, the promised mercy cannot be received. If the apostle in this passage denies the necessity of any works of righteousness, antecedent to our first justification, he does the same respecting the whole of our subsequent life: for the phrase, 'He saveth us,' includes our entire salvation. And if we cannot be finally saved without any act of righteousness, then the text does not prove that we can be justified without any act of obedience.

The statement which Tillotson here makes, is not only destitute of proof, but is also inconsistent with itself. He says, when people sincerely embrace the Christian religion, they obtain pardon though they never did one good action in their lives. But is not embracing the Christian religion a good action, and according to his own statement, they do not obtain the blessing till after this has been performed. Moreover, the persons he speaks of as embracing the Christian religion, and engaging to obey the precepts of the gospel he says, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice, and envy, and hatred of one another. This is very far from real Christianity, and the transition from one state to the other, is never without some gradation in the process. Before such people become real Christians, they remember their latter end; they yield to the operations of the spirit, and the convictions of their own consciences; they refrain from their evil course which produces such severe struggles in the heart that it is called

cutting off right hands, and plucking out right eyes. They feel a desire to flee from the wrath to come; and they engage in earnest prayers and supplications; and in some measure they learn to be meek and lowly of heart, and forgive others as they hope to be forgiven themselves. All these spiritual exercises may be called good works, as they proceed from a good principle, as they tend to a good purpose, and as they are such as God requires at their hands. Hence the statement that men may become real Christians, and obtain pardon, before they have done any good action, is at variance with itself, and likewise with all well attested, and with all conceivable experience.

What Tillotson states above, is at variance with other parts of his writings, as where he says, 'That repentance and obedience are con-'ditions of our pardon, and consequently of our justification, appears 'from these texts, *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your* '*sins may be blotted out.* Doth not this imply that upon condition 'we do repent and be converted, God will pardon our sins? *If ye* '*forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive* '*you, &c.* Where doth the scripture more plainly make any thing a 'condition of pardon, than it does our forgiving of others? I know 'not what a condition is, if it be not that, which if we perform, we 'shall receive the benefit promised; if we do not, we shall fall short 'of it.—St. James tells us, that the faith which justifies doth contain 'obedience in it: he says, Was not Abraham our father justified 'by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest 'thou how his faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith 'made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham 'believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness.—But if 'Abraham was justified by works, how was the scripture fulfilled 'which saith he was justified by faith; unless faith take in obedience? 'From whence we conclude, that by works a man is justified, and 'not by faith only; not by a naked assent to the truth, but by such 'a faith as includes obedience.'

Surely the above quotation shews, that in the opinion of this writer, a man is not justified before he has done one good action. It likewise shews how St. Paul and St. James can be fully reconciled on the article of justification, which is by making the faith of the former to include works, and the works of the latter to include faith. On any other principle how are we to understand these words of St. James? 'Was not Abraham our father justified by works? and the scripture was fulfilled which saith he believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness?' If the former instance of justification was by faith exclusively, and the latter by works, how could one be the fulfilling of the other? But if it be understood that faith in the former instance included works, and works in the latter included faith, then there is such a coincidence or agreement between the two cases of justification, that the latter might be called a fulfilment of the former. The way in which many attempt to explain this passage is unsatisfactory; because it leaves the difficulty without any proper solution: the substance of what is advanced is, that works in the latter instance,

are an evidence of faith in the former. Dwight says, 'The act of 'lifting up Isaac on the altar, by which, St. James says, this scripture 'was fulfilled, existed more than twenty years afterwards. In what 'sense then, did that act confirm this declaration of scripture? plainly 'in this: it *shewed* that the faith of Abraham was a real, operative 'confidence in the promises of God.'

What we should like to know is, how the offering up of Isaac could discover what kind of faith Abraham possessed twenty years before? According to this exposition we are to understand St. James to say, that Abraham's being at this time justified by works, was an evidence that he was formerly justified without them; which is what we cannot comprehend. Moreover, if St. James by being justified by works, meant no more than this, that works are an evidence of faith before men, it would not have answered his purpose. He was contending with such as maintained, that faith without obedience would save them. And if the apostle had nothing to object to their opinion but this, that they could give no evidence of their faith before the world, if they had not works, he would have left them firmly established on their own ground. They might have replied, What you say is very true, but we are not so fond of works as to do them to be seen of men. You allow that Abraham was justified without works in the former instance, and in this way we expect to be saved: and if we cannot have the good opinion of the world, we must make a shift to do without it. Let us only be certain of our own salvation, and you may be assured that the evidence of it before the world will give us very little concern.

As it is maintained that St. James is speaking of works as an evidence of justification, we should wish to be informed, what kind of works will prove a man to be justified? If it be said such as the offering up of Isaac: we reply that this was an extraordinary case, with which Christians are not tried; and therefore they can give no such evidence of their faith: but we do not see how either ordinary or extraordinary works can *prove* a man to be justified in the sight of God. Because many years previous to Abraham's justification he had been a devout worshipper of Jehovah; he had left his own country at the divine command, and had lived as a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth, looking for a better country hereafter; and his whole conduct made it manifest that he was a servant of the most high God. Yet it will be granted that these works were no evidence of his justification, because they preceded it. And as he could do all these things without justification, might he not likewise have offered up his son without it? We admit this was a greater trial than any he had experienced before; but it was so much in character with his previous devotion, self-denial, and obedience, that we see no reason to conclude, that this also might not have been done without justification: and whatever can be done without it, can never be the evidence of a justified state. St. Paul intimates, that giving the body to be burned at the martyr's stake, is no proof of acceptance with God. And even those divines who contend that St. James only speaks of works as an evidence of justification, assert

at other times that this blessing cannot be made manifest; that it is a secret between God and the soul, like the white stone which had a name written on it, that no man could read, but he that received it. Therefore it follows that James could not be speaking of works merely, as the evidence of justification. This is manifest likewise, because he is not speaking of justification before the world, but of acceptance with God: hence he asks, What doth it profit, though a man say he hath faith and have not works, can faith save him? On the principle some contend for, it might have been replied, Most certainly faith without works will save a man, if Abraham was justified without works, in every sense of the word; for when a man is justified before God, he is in a state of salvation. This must have put the apostle to silence, if he had been only pleading for works as an evidence of faith before the world. But his drift was to prove that faith without works is dead; and that by a dead faith no man can be justified: consequently Abraham's faith included works, when he obtained acceptance with God. Seest thou, he says, how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? and the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness. He refers to two instances of justification, and includes works in both; or he could not have given the latter as an example and confirmation of the former: nor could he otherwise have come to this conclusion, ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

The late Rev. T. Scott, in his essay on this subject, labours with all his might to exclude every description of works from justification: he says, 'The apostle constantly insists upon it that a man is justified by faith, and not by the deeds of the law. He even says without hesitation, To him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness. And he carefully distinguishes this way of justification from that by works; nay, opposes the one to the other as incompatible.—Because the law worketh wrath; therefore it is by faith, that it might be by grace. And if it be by grace then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.' This, on the subject of justification, contains the substance of all that can be advanced, for the utter exclusion of works of every description. But we have already proved that this could not be the meaning of the apostle, because it would make him contradict himself. That this author meant to exclude works of every description is evident, because he objects to the definition of faith, which 'comprises in it, repentance, love, and obedience.' Yet he repeatedly contradicts himself; he says, 'True faith is indeed the effect of *regeneration*, an important part of true godliness, and inseparable from all other holy exercises of the soul towards God.' He admits here, that regeneration precedes faith, and he defines regeneration to be 'A change wrought by the power of the holy spirit in the understanding, will, and affections of the sinner, which is the commencement of a new kind of life, and which gives another direction to his judgment, desires, pursuits, and conduct.' And if regeneration does all this before justification, then a man must have

some kind of good works when he is justified: he must have 'holy exercises of the soul towards God.' And what are those holy exercises of the heart but works? and when there are such exercises, faith cannot be alone. This he again attempts to overturn, and at the same time concedes the point. He says, 'It may be objected, 'that the scriptures frequently speak of repentance, conversion, love, 'obedience, doing the will of God, and forgiveness of enemies, as 'requisite in order to our acceptance: and how can this consist with 'the doctrine of justification by faith *alone?* No doubt these things 'are necessary: they either prepare the heart for receiving Christ 'by faith, or they are evidences that he is thus received.' What we wish to be noticed here is, that if these things prepare the heart to receive Christ, a man must have them before that act of faith by which the Saviour is received. If repentance, love, and obedience, be requisite to prepare the heart to receive Christ, then a man is not justified without works of some description; and the apostle could never intend to establish the opposite opinion.

Great stress is laid on the apostle's opposing faith to works, as if this proved that all works were excluded from faith. But his meaning is to be ascertained by his manner of speaking on other occasions: he says to those who had received the gospel, — Ye are not under the law, but under grace. Here he opposes grace to the law, but can any person imagine that whatever is included under either of these terms, was totally exclusive of the other? Were those who lived under the law excluded from all grace? Did they not know that with the Lord there was mercy, and plenteous redemption? On the other hand, were those under grace destitute of all law? Does not the apostle say, we are not without law to God; but under the law to Christ? He applied the term law to the old dispensation, because there the legal part predominated; but to the gospel he gives the name of grace, because grace there so much abounded, and was so very conspicuous. Now, if in the apostle's manner of speaking, law and grace do not altogether exclude each other, neither do faith and works. If the apostle, under the term grace, included some kind of law, then by the same rule of interpretation, under the term faith, he might include some kind of works: and other parts of his writings most evidently testify that he did so.

Those who exclude every act of gospel obedience, and every gracious disposition, except a naked faith, from a sinner's justification, do not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, as the apostle observes, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. We admit that the apostle uses these words in reference to those who expected to obtain acceptance by legal expiations, and other jewish observances; but they equally apply to those who go to the opposite extreme, and leave every act of gospel obedience out of the question. For this latter plan of acceptance, is as much the work of human invention, and as opposite to the method which God has established for the justification of a sinner; and consequently it is as much men's own righteousness, as that which the apostle condemns.

As what we have advanced cannot be overthrown by argument, it will be assailed by calumny; it will be called the popish doctrine of justification. In reply it may be stated, that on this point two things are needful to be ascertained: first whether it is the popish doctrine; and if so, then in the next place whether this part of popery be true?* The papists believe in the immortality of the soul; and in future rewards and punishments; but it is not needful for us to renounce those doctrines merely because they believe them.

The learned and judicious Hooker, in his discourse on justification, when speaking of the Catholics says, 'Did they hold, that we cannot 'be saved by Christ without good works? We ourselves do, I think, 'all say as much.—Then what is the fault of the Church of Rome? 'Not that she requireth works at their hands which will be saved: but 'that she attributeth unto works a power of satisfying God for sin; 'yea, a virtue to merit both grace here, and in heaven glory.' And if this be the popish notion on this subject, we suppose we have kept at a sufficient distance from it; and without running into one error to avoid another.

Dr. South says, 'The doctrine of human merit is one of the prin-'ciple foundations of popery. This is the great Diana, for which 'some of the most experienced craftsmen in the world make shrines; 'and by so doing, get their living, and that a plentiful and sometimes 'a splendid one too. They know full well that without this doctrine, 'the grandeur of their church (which is the soul of their religion) 'would quickly fall to the ground. For, if there be no merit in good 'works, then, no supererogation; and if no supererogation, no indul-'gences; and if no indulgences, then it is to be feared that the 'silversmiths' trade would soon run low, and the credit of the ponti-'fical bank begin to fail; so that the spirit and life of popery lies in 'a strong attachment to the merit of good works. Now take away 'the foundation, and the house must fall. Beat down, by force of 'argument, the doctrine of human merit, and the whole superstruc-'ture of popery must come down, and the sooner the better.'

It appears, therefore, that it was the merit of works which constituted the Popish error in reference to justification; and some of the reformers went to the othor extreme; they not only renounced the merit of works, but works likewise. Luther, in his translation of the New Testament, when he came to justification by faith, rendered it, justification by faith *only:* which raised such an outcry against him, that he was induced to leave out the additional term *only*, in a subsequent edition. Yet many of his followers, as we may call them, are as strongly attached to the phrase, justification by faith *only*, as if it was found in the scriptures. To the use of this phrase we see no objection, if at the same time they would admit of a scriptural definition of faith: but if they define faith so as to exclude every other spiritual exercise, and every act of gospel obedience, then we must tell them, as St. James does, that a man is not justified by faith *only*.

*'It is a pity,' says Baxter when speaking on this subject, 'that they who are below us in so many things should be permitted to excel us in others.'

The Reformers, by being so averse to every kind of good works in a sinner's acceptance with God, gave the papists a great advantage against them: who took occasion from hence to represent the doctrines of the Reformation as being so utterly at variance with the Christian Fathers, and the holy scriptures, as to constitute a new religion, and consequently a false one. This we believe did more to prevent the spread of the Reformation in many popish countries, than any other circumstance whatever.* If the Reformers after they had banished the idea of human merit in obtaining the pardon of sin, and after discarding many things to which the papists gave the name of good works, had consistently maintained, that genuine faith is inseparably connected with gospel obedience, in every stage of its progress, they would not have given their adversaries such a handle against them. And on examination we should have found that their doctrines were built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

And surely we may admit the necessity of some degree of obedience to God, without any idea of human merit mingling with our justification. Will not Christ come at the great day of accounts to render to every man as his work shall be; and to give eternal life to those who seek for it, by patient continuance in *well-doing*? Yet, will not the merit of this reward entirely belong to Christ, and will not this salvation be ascribed to the praise of the glory of his grace? And if there be no merit in the whole life of the holiest saint, how can it enter any man's imagination, that there is any merit in obedience before justification?

Yet it is constantly pleaded over and over again, 'That if any 'thing be before the remission of sins, except believing in Christ, it 'will obscure the doctrine of divine grace, and our pardon cannot be 'free.' We could wish those who thus speak, to consider whether they allow of any merit in human actions: and if not, on what ground can they make this objection. Is there any incongruity between gospel duty, and the doctrines of divine grace? When a man resolves to flee from sin, and endeavours to act in accordance with such a resolution, he does not lessen the debt already contracted; and from that debt he can obtain no discharge, but by free grace.

It is moreover to be remembered, that we are to be *saved* by grace; the free favour of heaven is not confined to the pardon of sin, it extends to the whole of our salvation. Yet, can any expect to be saved without obedience to God? Have not all the inspired teachers, who have spoken of the grace that should come unto us, invariably affirmed, that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap? He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; and he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. But if this gospel obedience, which is declared to be indispensible, is not inconsistent with being saved by grace, then those works which

* Extremes naturally lead to each other. The peculiar doctrines of the gospel had been so long neglected, that it is not to be wondered at if the first attempts to correct the evil, were accompanied with a tendency to the contrary extreme. — Rev. R. Hall.

are to be done before justification, do not make pardon less free and gratuitous. The objection, that if any thing be done except believing in order to obtain pardon, it will obscure or destroy the doctrines of grace, is what writers on that side of the question principally depend upon; hence they frequently introduce it with an air of great confidence and triumph; but when it is examined, nothing can be found more stupid and senseless.

The notion that nothing is to be done except believing in order to our justification, is absolutely false, and extremely pernicious. It has been shewn already that it prejudices Roman Catholics against the Reformation; and it must operate against the reception of the gospel among all sensible Heathens; who see that it is contrary to the light of nature, to suppose that sin can be pardoned before it is repented of and forsaken; and that such a notion sets the scriptures at irreconcilable variance with themselves. It is in vain to say, that Paul preached what was a stumbling block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness: for that was their fault and not his; and while he preached salvation through the merits of Christ, he constantly insisted that men were to leave their iniquities and turn to God, in order to obtain his favour. Were the notion now before us, consistently maintained, what would be likely to be the effect of it among ourselves? Many in our own country are lamentably licentious, and profligate; and according to the opinion under consideration, they are to be told, that they must continue in all their wicked courses, till they obtain justification by faith: that if they even sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, it will neither prevent their pardon, nor delay it for a single moment. On this principle it must be said, So we preach, and so you must believe: and not engage in any religious duty till you get into a justified state.

We meet with many, who, for years have been considered as decidedly religious characters, who say they are seeking pardon but have not yet obtained it; and according to the opinion before us, we must say to such persons, You have pursued a wrong course, in forsaking your former transgressions in order to obtain mercy; you should have continued in the practice of all your dishonesty, lewdness, and blasphemy, till after your justification. However, as the case now stands, your best way is to renounce your religious habits, and resume your former course of iniquity; lest you should obscure the doctrines of grace, and give encouragement to good works; to which the gospel of Christ is so repugnant, as to give no hope of mercy to those who perform them.

We meet with others at their first setting out in their way to the kingdom: and we tell them that to obtain acceptance with God, they have nothing to do but believe: and they reply, that they do already believe the gospel; and it is that belief which causes their own hearts to condemn them, and which excites a fearful looking for of judgment, and a desire to flee from the wrath to come. To this we answer, If your faith was genuine it would procure forgiveness. And they reply, That is what we want; What must we do to obtain that faith? Must we refrain from our former evil ways, and engage in

religious duties? Must we search the scriptures which testify of Christ, and are able to make men wise to salvation? Must we hear the gospel preached, since faith is said to come by hearing? Must we pray for divine grace, for it is written, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved? — To these questions we answer, You must do none of these things; nor engage in any other religious exercise; for if you do, it will be for substance, justification by works; which will dishonour Christ, and destroy the doctrines of grace. To this they reply, we clearly perceive from what you say, that we are to do no good work till we are justified by faith; but there is another point we should wish to understand: you say that we cannot exercise faith till it be given us from above; and as it may be a considerable time before it be given, how are we in the mean time to conduct ourselves? we cannot think of continuing in our former evil practices, for we hate sin, and desire nothing so much as to please God, whom we have so greviously offended. To this we reply as follows, — we perceive you are in a strait; but our favourite notion must not be departed from; and therefore we can only say as we have done before, that you must do no good work previous to justification, even if that should not be obtained till the last moment of your lives. — If such advice as the above was acted upon, no pardon could ever be obtained: yet no other advice could be given, consistent with the notion contended for. But it is a happy circumstance, that the abettors of this notion perpetually contradict themselves, and are very urgent with sinners to repent and turn to God; and by this inconsistency, they prevent much of the evil that would otherwise ensue.

To urge any man to maintain good works, either before or after his justification, is inconsistent with what these writers state in other places; for instance, Dwight, in the discourse where he undertakes to prove that St. James holds the doctrine of justification by faith without works, says, 'The title of the believer to justification is 'certain and complete so soon as he believes; because he will never 'cease to believe; and his faith will never cease to operate in uni-'versal obedience.' Now if a man can yield no obedience to God before justification, and cannot fail to yield universal obedience afterwards, for what purpose in the world, can any man be urged to maintain good works? How to make the various parts of such a system hang together, exceeds our comprehension.

When it is stated, that good works of some kind are requisite before justification, our opponents, with a design to embarrass and confound, ask, What is to be the quantity and quality of these works? We reply, might not the same question be asked with respect to good works after justification, and would it not be as difficult exactly to define in the latter case as in the former? We moreover observe, that the good works requisite before justification, are such as correspond with St. Paul's doctrine, which he taught publicly and from house to house, testifying, both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. When he stood before King Agrippa, he declared he was sent to turn men from the power of Satan unto God, that they might

receive forgiveness of sins. And he says, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. Hence we see, that wherever the apostle preached, he declared there were works to be done by sinners, in order to find acceptance with God. And can any suppose that he contradicted all this, when he wrote his epistles to the Romans, and the Galatians? With respect to what works are requisite to justification, let any person that pleases, define what it is to repent and turn to God, doing works meet for repentance; and we suppose if he does any justice to the subject, he will include all the works, for which we either do, or need to contend.

Let us hear what a Calvinistic commentator will say on these words. '*To repent of their sins;* to be sorry for them, and to con-'fess them, and enter into covenant against them; they ought to 'bethink themselves, to change their mind, and change their way, 'and undo what they have done amiss.'—'*To turn to God;* they 'must not only turn from that which is evil, but turn to that which 'is good; they must turn to God in love and affection, in duty and 'obedience, and return from the world and the flesh; this is what is 'required from the whole revolted degenerate race of mankind. To 'turn back to God, as our chief good and highest end, as our ruler 'and portion, turn our heart to him, and our feet unto his testimonies. '*To do works meet for repentance.* This was what John preached, 'who was the first gospel preacher, Matt. iii. 8. Those that profess 'repentance, must practise it, must live a life of repentance, must in 'every thing carry it as becomes penitents. It is not enough to 'speak penitent words, but we must do *works* agreeable to these 'words. As true faith, so true repentance, will work.'*

How forcible are right words! We see by the above, that our opponents plead for the same works before justification that we do; and lay it down as the doctrine of St. Paul, which in truth it is. But how is it that in other places they contradict all this? and so strenuously maintain, that we are to be justified without works of any description, and produce St. Paul as an authority for what they advance?

Indeed the position we maintain, that good works of some kind are requisite to justification, is by our opponents perpetually conceded and resumed; affirmed and denied; it is treated as that which cannot be, though they acknowledge it is. And they will not allow us to say what they say themselves, unless we will contradict it in the same breath, which we see no reason yet to do. And when any of the works above mentioned are pleaded for, it is said, but to what purpose we know not, 'That the error of the whole scheme lies in 'not considering the essence of justifying faith to be, trust or con-'fidence in Christ as our sacrifice for sin.' We reply that the scripture often uses the term faith in a more extensive signification: but if we take it as here stated, then the error connected with it,

* Matthew Henry.

and which happens to be on their own side of the question, consists, in considering, confidence in Christ as our sacrifice for sin, to be the first religious act of a man's life; whereas no person can exercise this faith in Christ, who has not previously repented of sin. And those who repent of their sins will confess and forsake them, and do works meet for repentance. Consequently, there are works which must precede justification.

On this subject, in one of the Church homilies, we have the following statement: 'St. Paul declares nothing on the behalf of man, 'concerning his justification, but only a true and lively faith, which 'nevertheless, is the gift of God, and not man's work without God. 'And yet that faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, 'and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is 'justified: but only shutteth them out in the office of justifying. So 'that although they be all present together in him that is justified, 'yet they justify not altogether.'—The faith *alone*, which these writers contend for, is allowed to have many worthy *associates*. They are careful to tell us that faith is not the work of man without God; and they should have added, nor God's work without the act of man; and wherever this faith is wanting, it is man's fault alone. Their drift here is to prove, that the other qualifications besides faith, have no part in our justification. But how does this appear, if they are essential requisites, such as cannot be dispensed with? Faith does not justify any other way, than as it is that which God has been pleased to require in order to justification; and if he indispensibly requires repentance, hope, love, and fear, are they not likewise to be ranked among the means of obtaining our justification. If it be said all these would not justify without faith; it may be replied, neither would faith without them: for without them it would be a dead faith, and by such a faith no man can be justified.

It is objected, that if any thing be required besides faith in our justification, it will not meet the helpless case of sinners; they will not have sufficient encouragement to expect acceptance.—To this we reply, that all the encouragement given to sinners to expect mercy, has its limits: and in giving encouragement we are not to go beyond what the scriptures warrant: even for a house full of silver and gold, we are not to go beyond the word of the Lord, to do less or more. Our position is, that a man must have other qualifications besides faith previous to justification: yet on this principle, sinners have all the encouragement which the gospel affords.

For illustration, we refer to the parable of the Prodigal Son. The elder brother could say to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee; neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment. And the father said, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. This shews the way in which men would be justified, if they always did what God has commanded. But the younger son could no more be justified in this way, than sinners can by the deeds of the law; for he had been a grievous transgressor; he had been guilty of ingratitude to his kind parent; he had wasted his patrimony by vicious habits, and had brought infamy on his father's house; and

could have no hope of acceptance, but through mercy and grace. But how was this to be obtained? Was it by persisting in his vile courses, or by a change of disposition and conduct? If the Father had met with him in the midst of his profligacy, in company with his harlots, and riotous companions, could he have looked upon him with complacency and delight, or have said, This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found? No, this was not the way in which his mercy was to be exercised: the son could not be restored to favour without a change of heart and life. And such a change there was in this young man; for when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enongh and to spare, and I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came. — What is to be noticed here is, that though he had not the works of the elder brother, yet he had works of another description, and without which he could not have obtained acceptance. He considered the wretchedness of his present situation, and how happy he might be in his father's house; he formed a good resolution to return home, and put it in practice; he confessed and forsook his iniquities; he humbled himself and cherished an affection towards his father, and prayed to be received into his service. And, from the moment he resolved to return home, he would be as careful to avoid whatever would displease his father, as the elder brother had ever been, if not more so, though he was seeking a free pardon. In this way he obtained a very kind and gracious reception. He was a sinner saved by grace: yet he could not have been saved without leaving his iniquities and reforming his life. The drift of this parable exhibits all the works we contend for in a sinner's justification; at the same time it holds out to returning sinners, all the encouragement which can be found in the gospel.

Another parable where the same truths are taught, is that of two men who went up to the temple to pray; one of which was a Pharisee, who trusted that he was righteous, because he was outwardly moral, fasted twice in the week, and gave tithes of all he possessed. The other was a Publican, who would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. This man went down to his house justified, rather than the other; for he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. By humbling himself before the Almighty, he obtained mercy. And what will be the conduct of a man, who seeks pardon by humbling himself before God? After he feels remorse of conscience, and is truly humbled, he will not indeed come like the Pharisee, boasting of his performances; nor will he persist in his former evil ways; but will be as careful to flee from sin as from the face of a serpent; his desire and endeavour will be to fear God and keep his commandments. If he pursued any other course, he would be no more justified than the proud Pharisee. Yet can any penitent sinner desire more encouragement than is to be found in the justification of the Publican? In

the case of the Pharisee, we see the works of the law which St. Paul rejects from a sinner's justification: in that of the Publican, and the returning prodigal, we see the works of gospel obedience for which St. James contends.

That there is always some measure of gospel obedience, as well as faith, previous to justification, we have proved from scripture; and have likewise shewn, that however strongly it is objected to, it is the very doctrine our opponents themselves teach, when they are not so 'system crammed,' and their minds are more open to the genial influence of divine truth. Let us proceed with this a little further. Let us hear Baxter, who, in his treatise on justification, says — 'Though Christ hath sufficiently satisfied the law, yet it is 'not his will that any man should be justified thereby, who hath not 'some ground in himself of personal and particular right and claim 'thereto; so that no man by the mere satisfaction made, is freed 'from the curse of the violated covenant, but conditionally. So that, 'as Austin says, He that made us without us, will not save us without 'us. A legal title we must have before we can be justified; and 'there must be somewhat in ourselves to prove that title, or else all 'men would have equal right.—Performing the conditions of a cove-'nant, is our righteousness in reference to that covenant. — The 'righteousness of the new covenant then, being the peformance of 'its conditions, and its conditions being our obeying the gospel or 'believing, it must be plain, that on no other terms do we partake 'of the legal righteousness of Chirst. To affirm therefore that our 'evangelical or new covenant righteousness, is in Christ, and not in 'ourselves, or performed by Christ, and not by ourselves, is such a 'monstrous piece of Antinomian doctrine, that no man who knows 'the nature of the covenant can possibly entertain, and which every 'Christian should abhor. It implieth blasphemy against Christ, as 'if he had sin to repent of, or pardon to accept, and a Lord that re-'deemed him to receive and submit to; for these are the conditions 'of the new covenant. Christ fulfilled the Law, but not the Gospel 'covenant, which imposeth a necessity of fulfilling the conditions 'of the gospel upon all that will be justified. To quote the scrip-'tures which assert this, would be to transcribe almost all the doc-'trinal part of the New Testament. — What unsavory stuff then is 'that of Mr. Saltmarsh, who directeth those who doubt of their 'gospel sincerity to see it in Christ, because Christ has believed 'perfectly, he hath sorrowed for sin perfectly, he hath repented 'perfectly, he hath obeyed perfectly, he hath mortified sin perfectly, 'and all is ours. —— But surely Christ's sorrowing for sin is not 'any acquitting of us for not doing it: And for his mortifying sin 'in us, that is the doubt, whether it be done in the doubting soul or 'not. If he mean it of destroying the guilt of sin meritoriously on 'the cross, that is but a strange evidence of the death of it in a par-'ticular soul: except he think, as divers that I meet with in Glou-'cestershire and Wiltshire, that Christ took our natural pravity and 'corruption together with our flesh. But I let go this sort of men, 'as being fitter first to learn the grounds of religion in a catechism,

'than to manage those disputes wherewith they trouble the world. 'Not that we can perform these conditions without grace: for without Christ we can do nothing: but that he enables us to perform 'them ourselves. — That it is Christ that repenteth and believeth, 'and not we, is language somewhat strange to those ears which have 'been used to the language of scripture or reason.'

'The bare act of believing is not the only condition of the new 'covenant: but several other duties also are part of that condition. 'I desire no more of those that deny this, but that the scripture may 'be judge. That pardon of sin and salvation are promised upon 'condition of repenting, as well as believing, is undoubtedly asserted 'from these scriptures; Prov. i. 23, and xxviii. 13; Mark i. 15, and 'vi. 12; Luke xiii. 3, 5; Acts ii. 38, iii. 19, viii. 22, xvii. 30, 'xxvi. 20, v. 31, and xi. 18; Luke xxiv. 47; Heb. vi. 1; 2 Peter 'iii. 9. That praying for pardon, and forgiving others, are conditions 'of pardon, is plain from these scriptures, 1 Kings viii. 30, 39; 'Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15, and xviii. 35; Mark xi. 25, 26; Luke vi. 37, 'and xi. 4; 1 John i. 9; James v. 15; John xiv. 13, 14; 1 John 'v. 15; Acts viii. 22. That love, and sincere obedience, and works 'of love, are also parts of the condition, appeareth in these scriptures, 'Matt. v. 44, x. 37, and xxv. 41, 42; Luke vi. 27, 35, xi. 28 and 'xiii. 24; John xi. 12, 17, xiv. 21, and xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 7, 10, 'and viii. 28; 1 Cor. ii. 9, ix. 24, and xvi. 22; Ephesians vi. 24; 'Phil. ii. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19; 2 Tim. ii. 5, 12; James i. 12, 'and ii. 5, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26; Rev. xxii. 14. — There must be a 'concurrence of them all, to make up the conditions which have the 'promise of life.'

'Yet faith may be called the only condition of the new covenant, 'because it is the principal condition—because all the rest are reducible to it, being pre-supposed as necessary antecedents, or contained 'in it as its parts, or else implied as its product or consequents. I 'confess it is a work of some difficulty, to shew how each part of the 'condition is reducible to believing: but I think hearing the word, 'consideration, conviction, godly sorrow, repentance from dead works, 'are implied as necessary antecedents — Praying for forgiveness, the 'forgiving of others, the pleading of Christ's satisfaction, are parts 'and consequents of faith, and acts subservient to it for the attaining 'of its ends. Faith therefore is the summary and chief of the conditions of the gospel, and not formally and strictly the whole. The 'common opinion, that justifying faith doth consist in any one single 'act, is a wretched mistake — Neither is Christ in respect of any one 'part or work of his office alone, the object of justifying faith: but 'Christ in his entire office of Lord and Saviour. If we receive him 'not as a king, we receive him not as an entire Saviour. To this 'end he died and rose again, that he might be the Lord of the dead 'and living: and therefore the receiving of him as priest alone, is 'not likely to be the condition of our justification. The gospel is 'the offer of Christ, and his benefits to them that first accept himself: 'therefore faith must be the accepting of the thing offered. I take 'love to Christ to be essential to this acceptance; and so some

'degree of love to be part of justifying faith, and not properly a 'fruit of it as it is commonly taken. That both are necessary to 'justification is doubtless; and that they are concurrent in apprehend-'ing Christ. And that love is part of the condition of the covenant 'is also undoubted, and therefore will have some hand in justification. '— From what has been said it appeareth in what sense faith only 'justifieth; and in what sense works also justify: faith only justifi-'eth, as it implieth and includeth all other parts of the condition of 'the new covenant; and is so put in opposition to the works of the 'law, or the personal righteousness of the old covenant. Faith only 'justifieth as the principal duty of the gospel or chief part of its 'condition, to which all the rest are some way reducible. — Faith 'only doth not justify in opposition to the works of the gospel; but 'those works do also justify, as less principal parts of the condition 'of the covenant.'

The extract above from Baxter, is here introduced to shew, that this celebrated theologian, even in a formal treatise on justification, advances the same doctrine which we have done: that he does this, will appear, we presume, on a proper examination, to all readers possessed of candour and discernment.

John Bunyan was a strict Calvinist: his Pilgrim's Progress is well known and highly approved; let us see whether in that book he does not teach the same things which we do: he strenuously supported justification by faith; yet he does not represent a man obtaining pardon, when he had nothing but faith. He shews that there was not only the commencement, but likewise a considerable progress in a religious life previous to justification: but let us hear his own words.

'I saw a man,' he says, 'with his face from his own house, a book 'in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked, and saw 'him open the book and read therein; and as he read, he wept and 'trembled, and broke out with a lamentable cry, saying, What shall I 'do? To his wife and children he said, this our city will be burned 'with fire, in which we shall come to ruin, except some way of escape 'may be found. At this his relations were sore amazed; and would 'sometimes deride, and sometimes quite neglect him. Wherefore 'he began to retire to his chamber, and pray for and pity them. He 'would also walk solitarily in the fields, sometimes reading and some-'times praying, and thus for some days he spent his time.'

After this we learn that Christian discoursed with Evangelist, and received from him a roll, on which was written, *fly from the wrath to come*. He inquired how this was to be done, and having received information, he began to run the Christian race. His family laboured to persuade him to desist from his purpose, but he pressed forward, crying life, life, eternal life. When some of his neighbours went after him to induce him to return, he not only withstood all their entreaties, but said unto them, You dwell in the city of destruction, and, dying there, you will sink lower than the grave; into a place which burns with fire and brimstone. Good neighbours go along with me. — I seek an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that

fadeth not away, to be bestowed on them that diligently seek it. He afterwards fell into the slough of Despond, but endeavoured to struggle to that side which was furthest from his own house, and nearest to the strait gate. When he came to that gate he knocked again and again, and was admitted by a person who directed him how to proceed, saying, Look before thee: Dost thou see that narrow way? That is the way thou must go. It was cast up by the patriarchs, prophets, Christ, and his apostles, and it is as straight as rule can make it. Then he went on his way till he came to the house of the interpreter; who gave him much instruction, and at his departure said, The Comforter be always with thee, good Christian, to guide thee in the way that leads to the city. From this place he pursued his journey, and having surmounted many difficulties, he obtained such a view of the cross as caused his burden to fall off. The question here is, Does not all this shew, that he had works, as well as faith, when he was justified? Not, indeed, the works which St. Paul excludes from justification; but those which St. James recommends.

Christian at one time went out of his way, to get his burden removed at the house of Mr. Legality; for which Evangelist severely reproved him; and let him know, that by the deeds of the law, no flesh living could be justified. Yet he did not tell him that he was not to obey the Gospel. So far from it, he directed him carefully to walk in the narrow way of holiness; and it was in that way he was prepared for that exercise of faith which removed his burden.

What his previous walk as a professor of religion was, we may further learn by the following discourse.—'Then said Charity to 'Christian, have you a family?—*Chr.* I have a wife and four chil-'dren. *Char.* And why did you not bring them along with you?—'Then Christian wept, and said, Oh, how gladly would I have done 'it, but they were all of them utterly averse to my going on pilgri-'mage.—*Char.* But you should have talked to them, and have en-'deavoured to have shewn the danger of being left behind. *Chr.* 'So I did; and told them also of what God had shewn to me of 'the destruction of our city; but I seemed to them as one that 'mocked, and they believed me not.—*Char.* And did you pray to 'God that he would bless your counsel to them? *Chr.* Yes, and 'that with much affection; for you must think that my wife and 'children were very dear to me.—*Char.* But did you tell them of 'your own sorrow, and fear of destruction? for I suppose that de-'struction was visible enough to you. *Chr.* Yes, over, and over, 'and over. They might also see my fears in my countenance, in 'my tears, and also in my trembling under the apprehension of the 'judgment that did hang over our heads; but all was not sufficient 'to prevail with them to come with me.—*Char.* But what could 'they say for themselves why they came not? *Chr.* Why, my 'wife was afraid of losing the world; and my children were given to 'the foolish delights of youth: so what by one thing and what by 'another, they left me to wander in this manner alone.—*Char.* But 'did not your vain life damp the words you used by way of persua-

'sion? *Chr.* Indeed I cannot commend my life, for I am con-
'scious to myself of many failures therein. I know also that a man
'by his conversation may soon overthrow what by argument or per-
'suasion he doth labour to fasten upon others for their good. Yet
'this I can say, I was very wary of giving them occasion, by any
'unseemly action, to make them averse to going on pilgrimage.
'Yea, for this very thing they would tell me I was too precise, and
'that I denied myself of things, for their sakes, in which they saw
'no evil. Nay, I think I may say, if what they saw in me did hinder
'them, it was my great tenderness in sinning against God, or of
'doing any wrong to my neighbour.—*Char.* Indeed Cain hated his
'brother, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righte-
'ous; and if thy wife and children have been offended with thee for
'this, they shew themselves to be implacable to good: and thou hast
'delivered thy own soul from their blood.'

Such was the life and conversation of Christian previous to his justification. He let his light so shine before men, that others saw his good works. This he learnt to do by the book which he read, and by the instruction of Evangelist; and not by the counsel of Mr. Legality. It is to be remembered that our opponents admit, that Bunyan has here given a faithful delineation of Christian experience and practice; and it is very evident that he represents Christian to be walking in the way of holiness before he obtained the pardon of sin. He was not standing in the way of sinners, nor walking in the counsel of the ungodly, but in the way of God's commands, when he was enabled to take such a view of the cross, as caused his burden to fall off. And if a man cannot exercise justifying faith, unless he has turned his feet unto God's testimonies, then, in one sense of the word, we see how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

It may, however, be supposed that Bunyan will give a different account of this matter, when he comes to treat formally on Justification. Whether he does so may be seen, for he enters largely into the subject, in the case of Hopeful. This man is made to say that he formerly delighted in revelling, drinking, swearing, lying, uncleanness, and sabbath-breaking. But by hearing and considering, he found that the end of these things is death; and that for these things the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.—Hence he thought he must endeavour to mend his life, or he was sure to be damned; and accordingly he fled from sin, and sinful company, and seriously engaged in religious duties. But still trouble came over the neck of all his reformation; for he came to understand that by the deeds of the law no man can be justified; and that when we have done all these things we may say we are unprofitable servants. He further thought thus,—If a man run a hundred pounds into the shopkeeper's debt, and after that shall pay for all that he shall fetch, yet if the old debt stands in the book he may be cast into prison. He likewise said, I still see sin, new sin, mixing itself with the best of what I now do. When he was in this perplexity, Faithful informs him, that unless he could obtain the righteousness

of a man that had never sinned, neither his own righteousness, nor all the righteousness in the world, could save him — that he must be justified by trusting to what this other person had done by himself in the days of his flesh, and suffered when he did hang on the tree.

Here it may be observed, that Hopeful is very properly made to see, that his reformation of life, however complete, would be totally unavailing without an interest in the merits of Christ; and likewise, the imperfection of his best duties, the guilt of new offences, and that he could not come before God but as a hell-deserving sinner. Yet when he was thus brought from all dependence on his own righteousness, he was not made to see that he had done wrong in forsaking his evil ways, nor was he taught to resume any of them again. He says, the very thought of turning again to sin was a torment to him; for his mind was turned against it. He was not instructed to relinquish any of his religious exercises; so far from it, he says, I was told to entreat upon my knees, with all my heart and soul, the Father to reveal his son in me: and to say, God be merciful to me a sinner; and make me to know and believe in Christ: magnify thy grace in the salvation of my soul. In this manner, he says, he prayed over and over again, and did not obtain an answer the first, nor the second, nor the third, nor the fourth, nor the fifth; no, nor the sixth time neither. Yet by continuing to seek the Lord in this way, he obtained mercy.

So far this is Bunyan's view of justification; and for anything we know it is exactly our own; yet it exhibits a course of gospel obedience as well as of faith. Hopeful had all the good works we contend for, before he obtained acceptance. Thus it appears, that what we say about works in reference to justification, is not only agreeable to scripture and reason, but is likewise the very doctrine taught by our opponents themselves, however much they may deny it on particular occasions.

Our opponents very frequently and clearly shew, that a man seeking Divine mercy must abstain from sin, and engage in religious duties with all his heart and soul; at the same time they contend, that he can have no good works before he is justified: and to be in any degree consistent with themselves they ought to maintain, that he never can have any all the days of his life: but they are not willing to venture so far. They earnestly plead the necessity of good works, as a preparation for death and judgment. When Bunyan, for instance, is exploding the vain opinions of Talkative, he says, 'Saying, and doing, are two things as diverse, as are the soul 'and the body; for as the body without the soul is but a dead 'carcass, so saying, if it be alone, is but a dead carcass also. — 'The soul of religion is the *practical* part: pure religion, and un-'defiled, before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless 'and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from 'the world. This, Talkative is not aware of; he thinks that hear-'ing and saying will make a good Christian: and thus he deceiveth 'his own soul. Hearing is but as the sowing of the seed; talking is 'not sufficient to prove that fruit is indeed in the heart and life; and

'let us assure ourselves, that at the day of doom, men shall be judged 'according to their fruit. Matt. xiii. 23. It will not be said then, '*Did you believe?* But, were you doers, or talkers only? And accord-'ingly shall they be judged. The end of the world is compared to our 'harvest; and you know men at harvest regard nothing but fruit.'

We see here how justification by works, at the day of judgment, is established by scriptural and rational arguments; and when such persons exclude all works from our first justification, we should wish to be informed on what ground they make such a difference. We are sometimes told that works will be required at the last day, only as evidences of our faith. But where is this written in the scriptures? And what purpose can such a distinction answer? If the evidence of works be indispensable, works themselves must be so likewise; for where works have no existence, there can be no evidence of them. If it be pleaded that the scriptures declare our first justification is by faith, that it might be by grace; we reply that the same is said respecting our whole salvation. He that believeth shall be saved, applies as much to the day of judgment as to the day of conversion. We are to be judged hereafter according to the gospel, and not by the law of Moses; and if this dispensation of grace and mercy does not exclude works of piety from our justification hereafter, how can it do this in the present world? If it be pleaded that the apostle expressly says our justification in this life is not of works: we reply that the same is affirmed respecting the whole of our redemption. In heaven, every part of man's salvation is as much attributed to the merits of Christ, as our first acceptance with God. If it be further pleaded, that works after we are justified are the fruits of divine grace, we answer, that this is equally true of all acceptable obedience before justification. If it be alleged that the scripture expressly speaks of our works being required at the great day of accounts, we reply, that they do so likewise, when they promise remission of sins; for they require us to turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. Moreover, if the justification we receive in time is without works, and that which we are to have hereafter will require works, then the former would not be adapted to the case of a convinced sinner; it could not relieve his fear and distress of mind.— Bunyan's Pilgrim says, 'I perceive by this book in my 'hand, that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judg-'ment, and I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the se-'cond.' This man, like all sinners under conviction, had a fearful looking for of judgment; and supposing such a person to receive a justification without works, how could that remove his fears of another tribunal where works will be required? Would he not be conscious that if the king were to come in to see the guests, that he would still be found without a wedding garment? We throw out these hints, for the consideration of those who make such an essential difference between the two justifications; and are persuaded that upon an impartial examination, they will find that they must either admit some kind of good works into our first justification, or exclude them from the last.

It may be said, that the opinion we are opposing is not peculiar to Calvinism; and we grant that it is held by other denominations: but this is no reason why we should not inquire what the scriptures say on the subject. If this opinion is not peculiar to that system, it is more nearly allied to it than many are aware of. It had its birth and bringing up in Calvinism, and whatever excursion it may make, it has a tendency to return to the same place again: and we are persuaded that it has led great numbers to embrace that doctrine. Indeed it easily slides into Antinomianism; and breaks through all the mounds which have been placed against that destructive inundation. Consider the privileges of the justified; they are sons of God and heirs of heaven; and this is the case whatever their crimes may have been, and as is supposed, before they have done any good work: and if so, it would be difficult to show a reason why good works might not be dispensed with altogether. Dr. Dwight, in his discourse to reconcile St. James and St. Paul, when speaking of Abraham, says, 'His title to justification was complete when his 'faith was counted for righteousness. Had he then died, he would 'have been accepted of God; and his soul made happy for ever.'— And it was the drift of this author to prove, that Abraham had then done no good work. And if a man can have such attainments without a single act of righteousness, is it not natural to conclude that no good work is necessary to our eternal salvation? It is pleaded that we are justified without works, because the Apostle says, not by acts of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy he saveth us. But if this passage, and others of like import, be expounded so as to exclude all works from justification, they will equally support the Antinomian notion. The scriptures inculcate religious duties on those who are seeking divine mercy, as the only way in which it is to be found; but if the sense of these passages be explained away, to favour the opinion that we are justified before we have done any good work, the same rule of interpretation will equally apply to all the precepts which require obedience from believers. Consequently, our position is not so unconnected with a refutation of Calvinism as many may have been led to suppose.

As a further confirmation of this point we have to state, that at a late Missionary Meeting in London, the Rev. Dr. Bennet gave the address, in which he laboured to prove, that a belief in Calvinism had a most encouraging influence on Missionary labours. He observed, 'That if the peculiar doctrines of the Wesleyan Methodists 'were carefully examined, it would be found that they did in fact, 'believe in the truth of that very doctrine they were so ready to 'repudiate. Did they not firmly believe that all the good which was 'done in the earth was the result of the out-pouring of the spirit? 'But as that spirit was not poured out in all cases, or in equal mea-'sures, was not all regulated by his own sovereign will and pleasure? 'Did not the Most High perform good according to his own plans 'and purposes? That, no Methodist could deny: and if he did not, 'where was the difference between him and his Calvinistic brethren.'

Now we suppose that any person undertaking to refute this state-

ment of Dr. Bennet, after admitting that no conversion can take place without the aid of the Holy Spirit, would maintain that conversion is not always the result of the Spirit's operations : that some resist the Holy Ghost, and harden their hearts against its influence; so that they receive the grace of God in vain. But this is not the case with such as are converted; consequently man is not altogether passive in conversion; but has to yield obedience to that command, *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, why will ye die?* But whatever overturns the statement of Dr. B. will prove that man has something to do towards his own conversion; consequently he must do some good work before he be justified in the sight of God. If conversion be accomplished by the spirit of God, without any act on the part of man, Antinomianism is the only rational scheme of Christianity which has ever been exhibited to the world; and if this be Christianity, the sooner we can get rid of it the better.

When it is urged respecting this notion that no good work is to be done before justification, that it is not peculiar to Calvinism, we should wish to be informed wherein it differs from that doctrine; and whether it does not inevitably lead to the same result. Let us see in what light some of the most intelligent divines of that persuasion view this subject. In the life of F. Gomarus, his biographer says, 'While many pens were engaged in opposing Arminius, there 'were but few who opposed him on the same footing with Gomarus, 'who was chiefly concerned about the ground of a sinner's accept-'ance with God, as he understood it to be affected by that controversy. 'The greater part of the disputants chose to make the controversy 'turn upon another hinge, contending about grace and free will, and 'what influence these had in the conversion of a sinner; but with 'Gomarus the grand inquiry was, what is necessary to the justifica-'tion of a sinner before God,—is any thing besides the work finished 'upon the cross? Any addition to this, he contended, was sub-'versive of the true grace of God.'

Here the grand enquiry, as it is termed, is, what is necessary to the justification of a sinner before God? and Gomarus answers, that every addition to the work finished on the cross, is subversive of the grace of God : and we must either admit this or contradict it.—If we admit, that in reference to our acceptance with God, every thing was done before we came into the world, we shall have to assign a reason why all do not obtain justification : and on the principle assumed, no reason can be found, nor even looked for in the state or condition of mankind : the only assignable reason is the divine will. And when we acknowledge that no cause exists in man, for some obtaining justification, while others are condemned, we plunge at once into the bottomless abyss of eternal, unconditional election and reprobation, and all the ingenuity of man cannot extricate us from Calvin's horrible decrees. If we contradict the sentiment of Gomarus, then it follows that some good work must be done before justification. Should any attempt to evade this consequence, by saying, that faith is the only requisite to acceptance, we ask whether they mean a faith which has done any good, or one that

has not: If they intend the latter, we must remind them, that as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also; and therefore good for nothing, and every system built upon it is worthless and vile. If we are justified by a faith which has previously produced no good work: then we are justified while hardened in our iniquity; when we have no love to God, nor hatred to sin; before we have formed any resolution to forsake our evil ways, or have had any desire to please God; all these blasphemous absurdities must be maintained, or otherwise it must be admitted that some good works must accompany our faith, when we obtain the Almighty's approbation. So long as we hold, that no good works precede our justification, we inevitably slide on to the foundation of Gomarus, on which the whole fabric of Calvinism is erected, and on which it will securely stand, till that foundation be overthrown.

Some, on this subject, are brought to admit, that there must be some previous good dispositions and actions, yet maintain that they do not enter into our justification; for though faith is not alone when it justifies, yet it is by faith alone that we are justified. The futility of this distinction, we have shewn in a former section. If those things which must accompany faith, are prescribed by the Almighty, as terms or conditions of our acceptance, then they must enter into our justification. If the Almighty will pardon a sinner who has repentance and faith, and will not pardon for the sake of one without the other, then both these qualifications are instruments in obtaining our acceptance. But though the great sticklers for faith alone, are sometimes brought to admit, that there must be other qualifications accompanying justifying faith, yet it is only when they are pushed into a corner, and can find no other way to escape. Their general method of treating the subject is such, as to lead their hearers to suppose, that nothing but a naked faith is needful in order to obtain pardon.

When people are brought to admit that there must be other qualifications besides faith, and yet deny that they enter into our justification, we wish them to consider whether the objections which they bring against our statement, do not lie with equal force against their own. They object to our plan that it is discouraging, that it engages people in a round of duties, instead of letting them know that they are to be accepted by faith alone. But surely if other qualifications are indispensable, there must be the same labour and care to acquire them, as if they looked upon them as conditions of their acceptance. Upon one of these schemes sinners are told for their encouragement, that they are to be justified by faith alone, but they are given to understand at the same time, that they cannot be accepted without previous repentance. On the other hand, we inform them, that repentance is one of the conditions of their acceptance, and when to this, faith in Christ is added, their iniquities will be forgiven. Is not this latter plan as full of encouragement as the former?

We request the reader to compare what we have advanced, with the sentiments of the Rev. John Wesley, which he published at the London conference, in 1770. He was then near seventy years of

age, and had thoroughly considered the subject; and he expresses himself as follows; 'Take heed to your doctrine. We have leaned 'too much towards Calvinism. Wherein? We have received it as 'a maxim, that a man is to do nothing, in order to justification. 'Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with 'God, should cease from evil, and learn to do well. Whoever repents, 'should do works meet for repentance. And if this is not in order 'to find favour, what does he do them for?—The objection is,—God 'does in fact justify those who, by their own confession, neither 'feared God nor wrought righteousness. Is this an exception to the 'general rule? It is a doubt whether God makes any exception at 'all. How are we sure that the person in question never did fear 'God and work righteousness? His own saying so is not a proof.'

We suppose by this it will be seen and allowed, that Mr. Wesley takes the same ground which we do. Yet, as our drift is to prove from scripture, that all spiritual exercises, which may be called good works, are not excluded from a sinner's justification, we may raise up a formidable host of foes, who will barb, if not poison their arrows, and exhaust their quivers upon us. Even good men may be induced to set themselves in battle array against us, and while employing deadly weapons, may think they do God service. If we escape the destruction which destroys at noon day, we may be much exposed to the pestilence that walketh through darkness. Among other lamentations we may have to say, It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: but it was a man mine equal, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company. But from whatever quarter we may be assailed, there is a power that can give protection. If any self-defence be requisite, we may adopt the language of him who said, Am I your enemy, because I have told you the truth? and hope in some humble degree to imitate the noble example of him who said, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?

But if we anticipate so much opposition, it may be said, why do we publish? We reply, because however much we may be straitened, while we have any establishment we wish to keep a conscience; and the love of gospel truth is paramount to every earthly consideration. Besides, after receiving many heavy blows we may still survive; and in the darkest season be able to say with the Apostle, We are troubled on every side, yet not altogether without help; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. And although when the truth is proclaimed, there may be some despisers, who may wonder and perish, yet it is to be hoped that many more will receive it in the love thereof: and that such will find it that word of grace, which is able to build them up, and give them an inheritance among them who are sanctified.

TIMOTHY SCOTT, PRINTER, SHEFFIELD.

CHRISTIAN SANCTIFICATION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE LEEDS CONFERENCE;

AND PUBLISHED

AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEARERS.

BY ABRAHAM SCOTT.

"As Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify
d cleanse it with the washing of water by the word: that he might present it to
nself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that
should be holy and without blemish."—EPHES. v. 26, 27.

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PRICE SIXPENCE.

CHRISTIAN SANCTIFICATION.

And every man that hath this hope in him, purifyeth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John iii. 3.

THE great and uniform design of the Gospel, is to produce and promote purity of heart and life, in all that name the name of Christ; and unless this end be accomplished in us, we cannot be happy, neither in this world nor in that which is to come; for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." This is a truth taught and confirmed by every part of divine revelation. But this evident and important truth, began to be corrupted in the days of the apostles. False teachers arose, who disgraced the Christian religion, by the introduction of antinomian errors and delusions. They so far perverted the scriptures, as to maintain, that believers, through the merits of Christ, were freed from all obligation to moral duties; and were left at liberty to walk in the light of their own eyes, and follow the desires of their own hearts, without any danger to their eternal salvation. These notions were not only erroneous, but extremely dangerous and pernicious. They made the divine commands of none effect, and indulged the worst propensities of the human heart; they turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, and subverted every principle of pure and undefiled religion; so far, as they pervailed, they dishonoured God, and destroyed the souls of men.

St. John, therefore, set himself to refute these degrading and destructive tenets; and in opposition to such erroneous opinions, he declared that sin is a transgression of the divine law, which we are bound to obey; and contrary to the example of Christ, which all believers are to follow. He likewise affirmed, that it is the privilege of Christians to be cleansed from all unrighteousness, and that no sin has dominion over those who are born of God; that he who committeth sin is of the devil, whose works our Saviour came to destroy. He likewise shows that sin cuts off all communion with God, for "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all;" and therefore, if we remain in sin, which is a work of darkness, and say that we have fellowship with God, the truth is not in us.

But, however great the happiness may be which is derived from fellowship with God, they will readily dispense with it who are in love with their sins. Yet, however much men may love their sins, they desire to escape eternal misery, they desire to die the death of the righteous, and to have their last end like unto his. But that they may not deceive their own souls, the Apostle here declares, that allowed sin is incompatible with a well grounded hope of being happy at the appearing of Christ; "for every man that hath this hope in him, purifyeth himself, even as

he is pure." These words will lead us to consider the Christian's hope, and the purity which this hope produces.

1. *The Christian's Hope.*—In considering this hope, we shall notice only those properties of it which the Apostle has connected with the text, namely, its object, and its foundation. With respect to its object, he says, "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

The words, *when he shall appear,* have a manifest reference to the coming of Christ at the end of the world; as where we are told, he will judge the quick and the dead at his appearing. And when he comes in judgment, it will be "in power and great glory;" hence the apostle calls it "the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ." His manifestation at the great day of accounts, may be called his glorious appearing, in opposition to his humble state at his incarnation, when he who had been in the form of God, took upon him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man. But the glory which he laid aside at his former appearing in the world, will be displayed in all its splendour at his second coming.—He will then appear in all that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. He will then likewise appear crowned with all the glory and honour of his mediatorial office; in virtue of which, he is invested with supreme authority, and universal dominion. "All power is given unto him in heaven, and in earth; for the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son." He has "a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things on earth, and things in heaven: and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Lord to the glory of God the Father." In all this glory, he will appear, when he comes to judge the world.

And every believer is inspired with the hope of participating in the glory of his exalted Saviour, by the precious promises, and gracious declarations of God's word. St. Peter says, "The God of all grace has called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus." He describes a believer as a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; and adds, that "when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away." On this ground we are exhorted to "be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that shall be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." St. Paul says, "when Christ who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory:" and St. John here declares, that "we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

It may here be asked, in what our resemblance to Christ will consist? And we reply, that we shall then be like him in a freedom from sin, and all its deplorable consequences. St. Paul declares that "Christ will appear the second time without sin," Heb. ix. 29. In this respect, his second coming is distinguished from his first appearing; he did indeed come into this world before, without any sin of his own; for he was "holy, harmless, and undefiled; separate from sin and sinners." But he stood charged with our transgressions. The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all. In this sense, he who knew no sin was made sin for us. He bare our iniquities in his body, on the tree.—His being charged with our sins,

as the cause of all his suffering
ad degradation; of his cross and
assion, his agony, and bloody
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this happy event, the apostle says,
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g of our Lord Jesus Christ, with
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ickness and sorrow, pain and death,
e felt and fear'd no more."

Christ will appear at last as a
nquerer over all the enemies of
his kingdom. He is now at the head of all principalities and powers in heavenly places; and the apostle tells us, that "he must reign till all his enemies are subdued under his feet." By this it appears, that he is still engaged with the powers of darkness; he is still destroying the work of the devil; and the last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death. His victory on the cross, made all his other conquests certain. Earth and hell make war with the Lamb; but the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is King of kings, and Lord of lords. And at his second coming he will stand forth as a conqueror, whose enemies are so entirely subdued that they are incapable of making any further resistance.

In this respect, likewise, his people will be like him. They have now a warfare to maintain against the most formidable adversaries; they have to wrestle, "not against flesh and blood only; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." But then their warfare will be accomplished; their enemies will be finally subdued; and they will stand forth as triumphant conquerors over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Out of all their conflicts, they will come forth more than conquerors, through him that has loved them. And they will then enter into the great reward of all their victories; according to that promise of our Saviour, where he says, "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

It may be likewise observed, that Christ will appear at last in all the tokens of the Father's approbation. He was eternally the Father's de-

light. An indication of this was given at his baptism, when a voice was heard from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But the tokens of the divine approbation were in a great measure concealed, while he remained a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; and this was more especially the case, when it pleased the Lord to bruise him for our iniquities; and so far to withdraw the light of his countenance from him, as to cause him to exclaim, while hanging on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" But every thing which could tend to conceal the divine approbation from our Saviour, will be removed, when he comes in his own glory, in the glory of the Father, and in the glory of the holy angels: while he will sit upon the throne of his glory as the judge of the world, his high exaltation will display all the tokens of the Father's approbation.

In this respect also, his people will be like him. In the world they pass through much tribulation; they are much hated and despised, and have been accounted the filth and offscouring of all things. Their persecutions and sufferings have made them appear to such as prospered in wickedness, as men whose ways were madness, and their ends without honour; and as if they had no interest in the divine favour.—But when they will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, to be for ever happy with him; the brightest rays of God's favour will shine upon them. Among the assembled nniverse they will appear as the excellent of the earth, and the favourites of heaven; as the distinguished persons, whom the king of glory delights to honour. The Almighty says, "They shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels." They are indeed now his jewels but then they will appear like what they are, the sons of God and heirs of eternal glory. Their Redeemer and Judge will say unto them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. For as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me." This declaration before the world will show how highly God approves both of their persons and of their works.

It may be further observed, that Christ will appear in a glorified body; in a body not subject to dissolution, but free from all the defects of mortality. And in this respect also, his people will be like him. "For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." One reason why Christ was called the Son of God, was, his resurrection from the dead; and in like manner our resurrection will show our adoption into the family of heaven hence our Saviour says, they which shall be considered worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, can die no more, but are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection; and the resurrection is called "the manifestation of the sons of God." And the Apostle says, "We ourselves do groan, waiting for the adoption, namely, the redemption of our bodies." This redemption of the body will make us like unto the Son of God. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dis-

onour, it is raised in glory; it sown in weakness; it is raised power; it is sown a natural ody, it is raised a spiritual body." nd when these mortal bodies have it on immortality, we shall in is respect resemble our glorified edeemer. Hence the Apostle ys, "Our conversation is in hea-n, from whence also we look for ie Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ; ho shall change our vile body, iat it may be fashioned like unto is glorious body, according to ie working, whereby he is able en to subdue all things unto imself."

It may also be observed, that ir Saviour will appear at the last, othed in that celestial splen-our, of which we can now form adequate conception. Some impses of his ineffable light have en already, at different times, hibited to his servants. When he was on the mount with Peter, mes, and John, he was trans-ured before them; and his face d shine as the sun, and his raiment as white as the light." This, St. eter calls that "excellent glory." nd when St. Paul journeyed to-rds Damascus, the Lord Jesus peared unto him by the way, in ight from heaven above the bright-ss of the sun. He appeared like-se in the Isle of Patmos; and at at time, St. John tells us that "his es were as a flame of fire; his et like unto fine brass, as if it rned in a furnace; and his coun-nance as the sun shining in his ength:" and he will, no doubt, pear in much greater splendour nen he comes in the clouds of aven. And in this respect, his ople in some measure, will be e him; "For then shall the righ-ous shine forth as the sun in the gdom of their Father, for ever d ever." Then may our Saviour say, as he formerly did, in an address to the Father, "The glory which thou gavest me, have I given them.

It may likewise be observed, that Christ had a "joy set before him, for which, he endured the cross and despised the shame;" and whatever joy he formerly had in prospect, he will then have in full possession; "when he will come to be glorified in his saints, and admired of all that believe." He will then see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. He will feel unspeakable joy and satisfaction at the glorious result of his mediatorial office, in the full and final salvation of his people; and in this respect, his people will be like him. For he will then say to every one of his faithful followers, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Where he is, there shall his servant be also; and in his presence, there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. The degree of our future glory and felicity is above our comprehension; for "it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

When our Saviour appears, we shall see him as he is. This is not the case in the present world; for we now walk by faith, and not by sight. We have in various ways clear indications of his existence and perpetuation; but yet we do not see him immediately and directly. We see with the eye of the mind, a reflection of his attributes, in the works of Creation; for by the things which are made, are manifested his eternal power and Godhead. In the same manner we see him in the works of providence; for he is known by the judgments which he executeth. We see him by the light of his word, which testifies of him, and contains the revelation which God has made of his Son. And in divine

ordinances, he manifests himself to his people, as he does not to the world. But during our abode in the present world, we do not see him in person; nor can our minds adequately comprehend his glorious perfections. "Here we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Here we know in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." Hereafter our faith shall be turned into sight; and then "we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known." We shall see our glorified Redeemer personally and distinctly in all his beauty and excellence.

At the great day of accounts, a sight of Christ will not be confined to his people; he will be visible to all mankind: for St. John says, "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; and they also which pierced him; and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." But the ungodly cannot be properly said to see him as he is in himself: they will see him in the form which they have caused him to assume towards all the workers of iniquity. The cloud at the Red Sea, presented a bright side to the Israelites, and a dark side towards the Egyptians. So Christ will have a very different appearance to the righteous and the wicked. The wicked will not see him as the Lamb on Mount Zion, but as the lion of the tribe of Judah: they will not see him as the merciful Saviour, but as the condemning lawgiver. They will see him arrayed in vengeance, and clothed in indignation, saying, "Bring hither those mine enemies that would not have me to reign over them, and slay them before my face. For the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel." But the righteous will see Christ as he is in himself. They will see him in all the amiableness of his grace and favour; in all the light of his love and mercy, and in all the splendour of his perfections and meritorious achievements. They will see him as their God and Saviour, as the eternal source of all their glory and felicity: and with rapture they will exclaim, "This is our God, we have waited for him."

When St. John says, we shall be like our Saviour, for we shall see him as he is, he may be understood to affirm, either that our seeing him will be a cause of our likeness, or a proof of it. Our seeing him may in some measure be a cause of our likeness. The sight which Moses had of the Divine glory in the mount caused his face to shine with such splendour, that the children of Israel could not bear to look at him till he had put a veil over his face. In like manner, a view of our glorious Redeemer may have a transforming influence on his people: it may cause them to shine with borrowed rays divine, so as to reflect his image and likeness. This, in some measure, takes place in the present world. "We beholding," says the Apostle, "as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, even from glory to glory." We may therefore expect, by a sight of Christ, to be more perfectly tranformed in the world to come.

But our seeing him as he is, may be taken as a proof of our likeness to him: for in our present state we could not bear the sight of his unclouded glory. He dwells in the light which no mortal can approach: no man in the body could see his face and live. But when we have put off these earthly tabernacles and are clothed with immortality after the manner of our blessed Sa-

our, then we shall have the power, s well as the privilege, to see him s he is. Thus the great object of ie Christian's hope is to be like 'hrist at his appearing; like him purity and immortality, in glory id felicity.

But what is of equal importance, id of more immediate concern to s, is the foundation of this hope. f this St. John speaks, when he ys, "every man that has this ope in *him*." This passage a detached form might lead s to suppose, that the man here poken of had this hope in him- lf, which in a certain sense is un- oubtedly true; but this is not what ie apostle means in this place. If e view the passage in connexion ith what goes before it and what llows it, we shall see the apostle's eaning to be, that our hope is in hrist; it is in him that our hope heaven is founded. This hope sts in the merits of Christ, and ot in any merit of our own. If ft to ourselves, we could have no ell-grounded hope of eternal life, ecause "all have sinned, and come ort of the glory of God;" and nerefore, where perfect obedience is quired, we cannot stand in the dgment. "By the deeds of the w shall no flesh living be justified." epentance and reformation do not move the guilt of past transgres- ons; nor can God exercise his ercy towards sinners in any way at is inconsistent with his justice, id the designs of his moral govern- ent. "There is, therefore, no name ven under heaven by which we n be saved but the name of Christ." y infinite wisdom and goodness he laid in Zion as a sure foundation, which we are all to build our pes of eternal life; "for other undation can no man lay, than at which is laid, which is Christ sus."

Our hope of heaven is in Christ, because the salvation of sinners was the sole end of his mission to the world. "He came to seek and to save that which was lost." "He came not to call the righte- ous, but sinners to repentance." This was the gracious purpose of both the Father and the Son. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be sav- ed." The apostle declares, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus come into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." "Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter be- lieve on him to life everlasting."

Our hope is in Christ, because he was every way qualified for the work of redemption. He took our nature upon him, that he might be able to give his life for the world. And when he had assumed human nature, he still retained the divine nature in all its plenitude: "for in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Had he been a mere man, he could have afforded us no hope of salvation; we might as well expect to save ourselves, as to place our confidence in an arm of flesh. But the scriptures de- clare, that he "was in the beginning with God, and was God. And by him were all things created which are in heaven, and in earth." He is "the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, who has the government upon his shoulder, and of his dominion there shall be no end." In such an almighty Saviour, we may trust and not be afraid.

Our hope is in Christ, because he has suffered in our room and stead. His soul was made an offering for sin. "He is the propitiation for our

sins; and not for ours' only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Hence "we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement."

Our hope is in Christ, because he is our advocate with the Father. As our High Priest, he ascended into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us; and by pleading the merits of his death, he cannot fail to procure for believers every new covenant blessing. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Our hope is in Christ, because he has promised eternal life to all his followers. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; nor shall any man pluck them out of my hand." "Faithful is he who has promised, who also will do it." Hence we hope for a crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

The hope of a Christian, therefore, is rational, and well-founded; and he is ready to give an answer to every one that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him, with meekness and fear. This hope, in all the storms of life, is "as an anchor to the soul, both sure and stedfast, entering into that within the veil, whither Christ, the forerunner, for us is entered." And we shall have no fear of death and the grave, if we continue grounded, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel.

II. Having considered the object and the foundation of the Christian hope, we are now to notice the purity which it produces. We are here told, that "every man who has this hope in *him*, purifies himself, even as *he* is pure;" because purity in this life is essential to salvation in the world to come. Heaven is, indeed, gratuitously bestowed on the people of God: their future recompence of reward is unmerited and free; "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Salvation is by faith, that it might be by grace; not of works, lest any man should boast." If eternal life were not the free gift of God, we could have no hope of ever attaining it; for after we have done the will of God, we may say, we are "unprofitable servants." But though the great reward of eternal glory and felicity, is only to be obtained by the free kindness, and the unmerited favour of the Almighty, yet it will be given to such only, as are previously prepared for its reception. Hence we are so frequently exhorted in scripture, to seek for a preparation for eternal blessedness; to "give all diligence, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." Our Saviour is gone to prepare mansions for his people, and these mansions of glory will be given to those for whom they are prepared; and they are prepared for all such, and such only, as love and fear God; for such as are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance with all the saints in light. And the only meetness for heaven is gospel purity; and therefore our Saviour says, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God;" and we are told, that "Nothing which defileth, shall enter through the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem."

The purity required of us, as meetness for heaven, supposes our previous pollution. If man was not impure, there could be no necessity

r his purification. Sin is the de-
ement of the soul: it defaces the
vine image from the human heart,
id makes man carnal, sensual,
vilish. The Almighty is of
rer eyes than to behold iniquity
thout indignation: it is the abo-
nable thing which his soul hateth:
d we are all sinners, both by na-
re and practice: we are far gone
m original righteousness: "we
e a seed of evil doers; a people
len with iniquity." There are
ne who deny the doctrine of man's
pravity, and are fond of expatiat-
g on the moral rectitude of human
ture: they contend that we have
ceived no contamination from our
st parents,* and are not prone to
quity, when we come into the
rld: but in opposition to this
inion, we plead the express de-
rations of God's word. There
are told, that "The whole world
th in iniquity. By one man sin
tered into the world; and by his
obedience, many were made sin-
rs. The children of men are
rrupt: they are all gone aside,
ey are altogether become filthy;
ere is none that doeth good, no
t one. All have sinned, and
ne short of the glory of God.
ne heart of the sons of men is fully
in them to do evil. The carnal
nd is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. The imagination of man's heart are evil from his youth. The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh. So then, they who are in the flesh cannot please God. All flesh had corrupted his way, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth; and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil, and that continually. To the unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Such is the language of inspiration respecting the total and universal depravity of mankind. Against those who deny the doctrine of man's depravity, we appeal to matter of fact: for the corruption of human nature is practically exemplified. In all ages and nations, the iniquity of man has been great in the earth. "Men are evidently and confessedly so corrupt, that all the laws of heaven and of earth, are insufficient to restrain them from their crimes." And "a good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit." And if men are not naturally corrupt, how is it that no individual ever escaped the contagion?—that the best examples fail to produce the desired effect?—that no man could ever be saved without a change of heart? It may likewise be observed, that the corruption of human nature is keenly felt, and deeply lamented, by every awakened sinner: they know the plague of their own hearts, and will acknowledge that they are all as an unclean thing, and their righteousness as filthy rags. They feel their inbred corruption a burden too heavy to bear; and with a

* To those who object to our de-
avity by the fall of Adam, Dr. Og-
n says, "It would be severe in
d, you think, to *degrade* us to such
ad state as this, for the offence of
r first parents: but you can allow
n to *place* us in it without any in-
cement. Are our calamities less-
ed for not being ascribed to
lam. If your condition be unhap-
, is it not still unhappy, whatever
s the occasion? With the aggra-
ion of this reflection, that if it was as
od as it was first designed, there
ems to be somewhat the less reason
look for its amendment."

broken and a contrite spirit, they will exclaim, "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? Wherefore I abhor myself as in dust and ashes. I am shapen in sin: and in iniquity did my mother conceive me. I know that in me dwelleth no good thing. I am carnal, sold under sin. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The doctrine of man's depravity, is therefore clearly and strongly expressed in scripture, and is confirmed by the universal practice and experience of mankind; and from this internal pollution, arises the necessity of purification.

It is to be distinctly understood, that the purity required of candidates for glory, is not ceremonial, but moral and spiritual. The Pharisees thought themselves sufficiently purified by divers washings and purifications of the body: hence our Saviour reproved them for making clean the outside only, while their inward part was full of wickedness. He declared it was that which cometh from within, that defiles a man: consequently, it is the inward part that must be cleansed. Some Christians think baptism a sufficient purification:*

* Many suppose that baptism is the same with regeneration. In the early ages of Christianity, these terms were often used as synonymous, because it was taken for granted that none but truly regenerate persons would submit to the rite which engaged them to separate themselves from an ungodly world, and exposed them to the most imminent peril of their lives. But there is a wide difference between the two; regeneration being absolutely necessary to salvation, while baptism, as in the case of the dying thief, may under some circumstances be dispensed with. Besides, it was doubtless the great design of our Lord and his apostles to regenerate and convert men; but were they so intent on administering the rite of baptism? Our Lord, we are told, baptised no man; and it is said of Paul, that God sent him not to baptise, yea, he himself thanks God that he ha baptised none but Crispus and Gaiu but if he had regenerated none othe would he have thought that a prop ground of thanksgiving? Again, if ba tism and regeneration are the sam thing, we may use them altogether synonymous terms; now it is said th "whosoever is born of God, overcome the world, and that he neither *doeth* si nor can sin, because he is born of God But if we should say the same of all th are baptised, would not the worldly an sinful lives of many flatly contradict us It appears then from the superior impo tance of regeneration, from the design Christ and his Apostles respecting it, an from the properties ascribed to it i scripture, that it neither is nor can be th same with baptism. Baptism is an ou ward work of man upon the body; regene ration is an inward work of God upo the soul."—*Simeon, of Cambridge.*

but this is only "an outward an visible sign of an inward and spir tual grace;" and many may hav had the sign, who have not th thing signified. The purity re quired, as a qualification for heave is that of being created anew i righteousness, and true holiness, a ter the image of Him who creat us; which the apostle calls, th "washing of regeneration, and th renewing of the Holy Ghost:" it to be cleansed from all evil propen sities, and made partakers of th divine nature.

The purity required, includes pu rity of sentiment; "God is ligh and in him is no darkness at all; and in this respect, it is our privileg to be like him; we are to be calle out of darkness into God's ma vellous light: the eyes of our unde standing are to be opened, and w are to be guided into all truth.— Religious errors and delusions, d grade the soul, they darken an corrupt the mind, they pervert th will, and defile the conscience.— From this pollution we are cleanse when we receive the truth in th love thereof, the whole truth as it

Jesus. "We are begotten again the word of truth." When the spel is properly received, it is the ord of grace that is able to build up, and give us an inheritance ong them who are sanctified.—ence, our Saviour, in addressing e Father in behalf of his followers, ys, "Sanctify them through thy ith; thy word is truth." His ith is to dwell in us richly, in all isdom and spiritual understanding. mind properly enlightened with a owledge of the truth, is not only itself an essential branch of Chris-n purity, but it likewise promotes e acquisition, the progress and mpletion of every other part of at purity.

And another part of this purity, s respect to our affections and dis-sitions. There are two ways in hich our affections may be im-re; the first is, when they are aced on unlawful objects; the her is, when they are inordinately tached to objects which are in emselves lawful; the latter is for-dden as well as the former, for it written, "Love not the world, nor e things of the world, for if any an love the world, the love of the ather is not in him." As the ings of the world may be lawful in emselves, every degree of affec-n to them is not prohibited; it is ndue, or inordinate attachment to rthly things that we are to be reful to avoid; otherwise we shall ll into condemnation, we shall be fit for the enjoyment of God here d heaven hereafter. From this rruption we are to be purified, so to be crucified unto the world, to t our affections on things above; as to regard sin with detestation d abhorrence, and to love God th all our heart, our mind, our ul, and our strength; this is to be re in heart.

Another branch of Christian purity, is a holy life and conversation; we are to walk as becometh the gospel; adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, "for the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world." We are to keep our conscience void of offence towards both God and man. We are to be so separate from sin and sinners, as not to touch, nor taste, nor handle, the thing that is unclean. We are to keep our garments unspotted from the world. Our reputation is to be kept pure, as far as that can be done by abstaining from the very appearance of evil. This purity of life is intended by the Almighty, when he says, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." Those who obey this command, are purified unto God, a peculiar people zealous of good works.

A measure of this purity, in all its branches, has been obtained by all who have a well grounded hope of eternal life. All such have had a godly sorrow for sin, and have brought forth fruit, meet for repentance; their iniquities have been confessed and forsaken; they have been turned from darkness unto light; from the power of sin and Satan unto God; that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified. The love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Spirit given unto them. They have been put in possession of that faith, which works by love, and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. Unless we have experienced such a change of heart and life, we cannot have a good hope through grace. "For except a man be born

again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Previous to such a change, we are without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world.

But St. John has reference to a further work of purification, when he says, "Every man that has this hope in *him*, purifies himself, even as *he* is pure." To understand this, it is to be remembered, that after the purity is attained which constitutes conversion to God, there is still need of a subsequent purification. Because when sin is conquered it may not be destroyed, when the old man is crucified, he may not be dead. When a believer is living in the fear and favour of God, he may feel the remains of inbred corruption, as roots of bitterness springing up to trouble him. Under temptation, he may feel the remains of pride, envy, impatience, unbelief, and love of the world. This is not a state to be rested in; if a man is not seeking to be delivered from it, he will lose what has been wrought, and his last state will be worse than the first. A man therefore, who has the hope of eternal life, is seeking to have sin entirely destroyed, both root and branch, that he may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God; that he may be sanctified wholly: and his whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some affirm that sin cannot be destroyed till death; but the word of God does not give this doleful information: it declares that Christ came to save his people from their sins; and he is able to save unto the uttermost; that his blood cleanses from all sin. Neither scripture nor reason can enable us to discover that death can make any change in the moral state and condition of the soul, or that we shall enter Heaven without any other meetness tha what has been acquired in this lif All the promises of sanctificatio relate to the life that now is, an not to that which is to come; an all the means of purification we rea of in scripture, are to be employe in this life only. It is therefore i this life, that we are to be sa ved from all sin; "now is the ac cepted time; behold, now is the da of salvation."

It is to be further observed, tha after sin is destroyed, religion i still a progressive work; whateve advances we have made, we are t be going forward; from little chil dren, we must grow to young me and from young men we must pr ceed to be old fathers; and whe we are arrived at this state, we a still to be growing in grace. S Paul could say, "The law of the sp rit of life, that is in Christ Jesu has made me free from the law sin and death; the life that I liv is by faith in the Son of God, wh loved me, and gave himself for me. But notwithstanding his great at tainments in religion, he likewis says, "Not as though I had alread attained, either were already per fect; but I follow after, if that I ma apprehend that, for which also I ar apprehended of Christ Jesus. Bre thren, I count not myself to hav apprehended; but this one thing do, forgetting those things whic are behind, and reaching forth unt those things which are before, press toward the mark, for the priz of the high calling of God in Chris Jesus." There was still somethin before him to which he was pres sing forward as eagerly as when h commenced his Christian course; an in this manner he was purifyin himself, by acquiring greater de grees of purity. And in this sens every man that has this hope in hi purifies himself; he seeks a growin

nformity to the Divine Being: he eks to be more rooted and ground- in love, that he may be filled ith the fulness of God. And this ill still be the object of his pur- it, till he finishes his course with y, and obtains the end of his faith e salvation of his soul.

It is likewise to be observed, that man in the pursuit of Christian oliness, takes Christ for his pat- rn: "he purifies himself even as is pure;" that is, as Christ is ire. He is seeking to attain a nformity to his Saviour. In our eavenly course we are to set Christ ways before us; for in him we all see every thing that we ought be. It is the will of God that we ould be conformed to the image his Son. That mind is to be in that was in Christ, and we are walk as he also walked. We e to "learn of him to be meek and wly in heart, that we may find st unto our souls." The Scripture niformly directs us to Christ, as a mulus to our growth in grace, and a pattern for our imitation. When . Peter exhorts us to exercise iversal holiness of life, he says, Be ye holy in all manner of con- rsation, as he who has called you holy." The Saviour's holiness is th the motive and pattern of ours. e are exhorted to patience in all r sufferings, from the considera- n that Christ suffered, leaving us example that we should follow s steps. When St. Paul exhorts to love one another, he says, Walk in love, as Christ has loved ." When he exhorts us to hu- ility and kindness, he says, "Let is mind be in you, which was also Christ Jesus; who, being in the m of God, thought it not robbery be equal with God; but made him- lf of no reputation, and took upon m the form of a servant: he mbled himself, and became obe- dient unto death, even the death of the cross." When the Apostle tells us that he did not seek his own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved, he says, "Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ." He would not propose himself as an example any further than as he lived in imitation of his Saviour. "Let every one," he says, "please his neighbour for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not himself." And when he would excite us to acts of beneficence and liberality, he says, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Thus we see Christ is constantly set before us, that we may copy his example.

We can learn the art of living to God more easily and perfectly by having a pattern before us: and the pattern which Christ has set is without any fault or imperfection. He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. He did no harm, nor was any guile ever found in his mouth. He passed through the world holy, harmless, and undefiled. He fulfilled all righteousness; and presented himself to God, as a lamb without blemish and without spot. Hence his example is the standard of Christian purity, and we are always to keep it in view, and to seek a growing conformity to it. So far as we are like him, so far we are purified. "And if any man has not the spirit of Christ, he is none of *his*." If we are his disciples, it is reasonable that we should imitate our Lord and Master; that we should wear his garb, and drink into his spirit; so that those who see our words and actions, tempers and dispositions, may take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus. This will be for our good,

and his glory; and to this we are obligated by every principle of love and gratitude. And therefore every believer purifies himself as Christ is pure.

St. John declares that "every man that has this hope in him purifies *himself*." But we are not to suppose that any man can do this, either wholly of himself, or in any measure by his own strength. None but God can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. It is God's prerogative to change the heart of man; and, by his precious promises, he has engaged himself to the performance of this work. He says, "I will take away the stony heart, and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."

There are, however, various causes of Christian purity; all of which must concur to produce the desired effect: yet the Scripture, in some places, attributes the whole effect to any one of the causes, without noticing the rest: at the same time, it is to be remembered, that when one cause only of our purity is expressed, all the rest are implied.

The procuring or meritorious cause of our purification, is the sufferings and death of Christ; and to this alone it is attributed, where he is said to have "washed us from our sins in his own blood." The Holy Spirit is the efficient or operating cause of our purification; and to this cause alone, it is sometimes ascribed; as where it is said, "The Lord shall wash away the filth of the daughter of Zion, by the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning." We are said to be baptized, or washed, by the Holy Ghost: we are chosen to salvation, through the sanctification of the Spirit. There are likewise instrumental causes of Christian purity, to which the work is sometimes exclusively attributed; as where the heart is said to be "purified by faith;" and believers are said to be "clean through the word spoken unto them." And from other parts of scripture, it is equally evident, that man has a part to act in the work of purification; and on this account, "every man that has this hope in him," is said "to purify *himself*." From a view of the whole subject as stated in Scripture, it appears that man cannot in any measure cleanse himself from sin, without the aid of the Almighty; and that the Almighty will not accomplish this work without our acquiescence and concurrence. Hence we are exhorted not to receive the grace of God in vain, and to stir up the gift of God within us. When God works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure, we are required to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. The promised aid of divine assistance is not to supersede, but to encourage our own exertion. Hence, the Apostle says, "Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Some exclude man from any part of this work, with a view to humble him; but this has rather a tendency to pride; for if man has no part to act in this work, he cannot remain sinful by his own neglect: his sinful disposition is his misfortune and not his fault: and there is nothing which tends so much to embitter a calamity, and to humble us under it, as a consciousness of the crime which deserves it. Some attribute the work of purificatio

exclusively to the Almighty, with a lesign to honour him; but it produces an opposite effect: for from his position, it necessarily follows, hat in every case where the work not performed, the failure is in the Divine Being; and that every man as pure as God wishes him to be. nd to avoid such gross imputaons on the Almighty, it must be onfessed, that there is something r us to do in order to our purifiation. If this was not the case, we ould all have been purified long ce: "For it is the will of God, en our sanctification." This ppears by all his promises, and acious declarations. To acmplish this work, he has not spar- his own Son; "and will he not ith him freely give us all things?" n God's part all things are now ady. "The Spirit and the Bride y, Come; and let him that hear- , say Come; and whosoever ll, let him take the water of e freely." If we are not sanctied, the hindrance is all in ourves: but this could not be the se if the work had to be entirely d exclusively performed by ano- er agent. In one sense, therefore, man may be said to "purify himf." He does this by using the eans of purification.

He believes it attainable by all ose who diligently seek it. He siders the great importance of blessing, as it prevents so many s and sorrows, and affords a suior enjoyment of the chief good: it is the best security under maold temptations, the best preparve for all the vicissitudes of life; l the best means of being fruitful very good word and work: and es us a clearer evidence for hea- , greater tranquillity of mind, l a security for a brighter crown the world to come. A consiation of the inestimable value and great importance of this blessing, produces eager desires for the possession of it; and these desires lay the heart open to the communications of divine grace, and give a title to the promises: such as, "God will fulfil the desires of them that fear him." "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." With a constant vigilance, he guards against outward temptations, and at the same time keeps his heart with all diligence. He denies himself of all ungodliness, and is careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit, by which he is sealed unto the day of redemption. The reason why we are not purified, is because we resist the Holy Spirit in his sanctifying influences: consequently, when a believer cherishes its influences, and is careful to avoid whatever would quench it, he is using the means of purification. He purifies himself by a diligent and devout use of divine ordinances. These are the channels through which sanctifying grace is communicated to the soul. When these ordinances are properly attended, we have communion with God, and we wake up after his likeness. A believer seeks for purity, by earnest prayer. He hears the Saviour say, "Except I wash thee, thou hast no part in me;" and his reply is, "Wash me, Lord, but not my feet alone; my head, and my hands, and my heart." Or with David, he will cry, "Create in me, O God, a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me: sprinkle me with hysop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." If we have not, it is because we ask not, or because we ask amiss. And that he may ask aright, he prays in the name of the Lord Jesus: he exercises faith in the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of

Abel. There is virtue in the Saviour's sacrifice to cleanse us from all sin. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?" Being persuaded of the efficacy of this purifying fountain, "he plunges into the purple flood, to rise in all the life of God." And thus, by faith, he washes his robes, and makes them white in the blood of the Lamb. And as he uses those means of purification, which divine grace renders successful, he is said to "purify himself."

To this purification, a believer is stimulated by a hope of heaven. "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifies himself." Hope, is expectation and desire united: but there can be no well-grounded expectation of happiness in a future state, without holiness in the present life; because such an expectation is opposed both to reason and revelation. The inconsistency and failure of such an expectation, is illustrated by the foolish virgins, who took their lamps. but took no oil with them: and by the man who went to the marriage festival without a wedding garment. A consistent expectation of eternal glory and felicity, will lead us to use the means of acquiring a suitable qualification; for without this, there can be no admission to the realms of glory. The other part of hope, is desire: and we cannot, in reality, desire the happiness of heaven, without a love to holiness on earth. All men do, indeed, desire to be happy in a future state; but no man in love with sin, can desire that kind of happiness, of which heaven will consist. The happiness of heaven, will arise from having the approbation of that Being, who is glorious in holiness; and from a contemplation of all the Divine perfections: it will arise from the company of holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; from celebrating the praises of God, and serving him day and night in his kingdom, "where sabbaths never end, and congregations never break up." But this is not the happiness which the ungodly can desire. Those who really desire this happiness, seek for an earnest and foretaste of it here: they choose God for their portion, and walk in the light, as he is the in light they love that holiness which is the image of God, and seek to abound therein more and more.

The hope of heaven, therefor leads a man to purify himself; it induces him to hate and shun whatever would disqualify him for the presence of God. A view of the glorious prize set before him, is an effectual inducement to run the Christian race. He chooses rathe to endure affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin, which is but for a season, because he has an eye to the recompense of reward. In the way of holiness there is a cross to take up it is a way of self-denial and mortification; it is in opposition to our natural inclinations and the course of the world; and "if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he must suffer persecution." But whatever sacrifices are to be made, privations or hardships endured, having this hope, says the Apostle, "we faint not; for though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day; because we reckon that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with

at glory that shall be revealed in ; for our light affliction, which is it for a moment, worketh for us a r more exceeding and eternal eight of glory; while we look not the things that are seen, but at the ings which are not seen; for the ings which are seen are temporal, it the things which are not seen are ernal." The hope of this glory nd felicity makes us willing to be, do, or to suffer, whatever is the ill of God concerning us; and by is means it promotes our purifica- on, it excites a desire to be pure heart, and assists in the attain- ent of this blessing; on this ac- ount, we are said to be saved by pe; and it is called a good hope, lively hope, and a blessed hope.

Since this hope of eternal felicity as such a powerful influence, and oduces such a happy result, it ould be kept in exercise: the ob- ct of that hope should be frequent- contemplated: our conversation ould be in heaven, from whence e look for the Saviour. Like oses, from Mount Pisgah, we ould take a view of the promised nd; we should attentively look at l the descriptions and representa- ns given of it in the word of God. his will increase our affection to e heavenly country; it will raise above the allurements of the world; will invigorate us in our spiritual urse, and enable us to urge our ay with strength renewed; and in e time we shall reap if we faint not, But let it be remembered, that attain heaven hereafter, the eat object to be kept in view, purity of heart and life; for this is e only way to the kingdom of God. his purity may be obtained by all ose who diligently seek it; and th this in our possession, we are titled to every other new cove- nt blessing; for holiness consti- tes us the sons of God, and if sons, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

Purity of heart is the greatest blessing we can receive on this side eternity; it gives the greatest dig- nity to the soul; it clothes it with robes of righteousness, and garments of salvation; it prepares us for every gospel duty, it makes us an orna- ment to our profession, and causes us to shine as lights in the world; it fits us for every changing scene of life, teaches us in all states to be content, and makes all things work together for our good; it removes the fear of death, and affords a measure of heaven below.

To produce this purity of heart, is the design of the Almighty in all his dealings with us. It is the design of his providences, whether they are prosperous or adverse. His bounty is bestowed, to excite our gratitude; his chastisements, are to yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness; we are tried in the furnace of affliction, that we may come forth as gold. Our purity was the end of the sufferings of Christ; "he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." "He was wound- ed for our transgressions, that by his stripes we might be healed. Our purity is the end of all the opera- tions of the Spirit. This is shed on us abundantly, that we may be washed, that we may be sanctified and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Our purity is the end of a Gos- pel ministry. When Christ ascend- ed, "he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

And as all these extraordinary expedients are adopted by heaven to accomplish our purity, "what manner of men ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" and "how shall we escape if we neglect this great salvation?" Do we possess this blessing, or are we seeking it in all the appointed means? Do we possess the hope of eternal life, and is this hope well founded? If our hope does not produce holiness, we are building upon the sand: but if our hope of heaven at the end leads to holiness as the way, then it is a sure hope: we have the witness in ourselves, and we know that when the chief Shepherd doth appear we shall receive a crown of life.

FINIS.

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A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST;

PROVING THIS TO BE THE DOCTRINE

OF THE

Holy Scriptures;

IN REPLY TO

ADAM CLARKE, LL.D. AND SOME OF HIS ADVOCATES.

By ABRAHAM SCOTT.

"Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."—Jer. vi. 16.

SHEFFIELD:

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1828.

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST,

&c.

THE subject which now claims our consideration, is to ascertain in what sense the sacred Scriptures call Christ the Son of God: whether this appellation is appropriated to his human nature exclusively, or whether it is likewise used to denote his Divine nature. In the present discussion, the Divinity of Christ will be taken for granted, without entering into the Socinian controversy: our animadversions will be confined to those who believe, as well as ourselves, that Christ is God over all, and blessed for ever.

There are now some individuals of great note and celebrity, whose praise is in all the Churches, and whom we highly esteem, who believe in the Godhead of Christ, and yet deny his eternal generation; maintaining that He is called the Son of God in Scripture, with respect to his human nature only, or in reference to some circumstance connected with his human nature; that this appellation never denotes his Divine nature, that it is never used to express any relation, which subsisted between Him and the first person in the Holy Trinity, previous to the incarnation. The worthiness of those persons may make it more painful to oppose their opinions; but, at the same time, it makes it more needful, because the credit they have deservedly obtained will otherwise have a tendency to give such opinions a more extensive circulation, and a firmer establishment.

2. The opinion that Christ was the Son of God before He came into the world, and from all eternity, is what has almost universally prevailed among all who have believed in his proper divinity. All the old divines of our own nation, the venerable reformers abroad, and the primitive fathers of the Christian Church, call Christ, God's Eternal Son, without any exception that is within the limits of our recollection: we speak of those who have been esteemed sound in the faith.

All the celebrated expositors of what is called the apostle's creed,

" Speak of the eternal generation of the Son of God," and they state this as the sentiment of all the Christian fathers, including those who lived nearest to the apostles.

That Christ was the Son of God, in his Divine nature, is maintained by Usher, Hammond, Hall, Hopkins, Bull, Taylor, Pearson, Burnet, Barrow, Tillotson, and Secker. This opinion entered into the earliest creeds, which were composed either for the explanation or vindication of the Christian faith; it was incorporated in the creeds of the Asian, Grecian, and Latin Churches. It found a place in the Lutheran creed, and in that of all the reformed Churches abroad, who were not tainted with the Arian heresy. This sentiment is maintained by our own established Church, by Presbyterians, Baptists, Independents, Moravians, and Methodists, and by every Christian community who believe in the Divinity of Christ. This opinion is vindicated by Owen, Charnock, Manton, Baxter, Henry, Watts, Doddridge, Wesley, and Fletcher.

The antiquity of this opinion, and its almost universal prevalence among those who have been termed orthodox, will not be disputed. And is it not incredible, that all the primitive fathers of the Christian Church, and all succeeding generations of orthodox Christians should have been mistaken, and totally in the dark, on so important an article of the Christian faith?

3. Those who deny the Eternal Sonship of Christ, and maintain that He was not the Son of God before He came into the world, are not the inventors of this notion, nor do we know who have had the honour of making the discovery. It was made the subject of public discussion about the commencement of the eighteenth century; it is to be found in Ridgeley's system of Divinity; it was warmly vindicated by Romaine, and is generally adopted by those who are called Hutchinsonians. But though the present advocates of the opinion in question are not the inventors of it, they are justly chargeable with vindicating a novel doctrine. And whether any new doctrine since the canon of Scripture was completed can be true, remains to be proved.

4. Socinus introduced a new doctrine into the religious world, when he denied the pre-existence of Christ; and had the temerity to contradict all former interpretations of Scripture on this subject: and this circumstance alone made his opinion incredible, as Tillotson proves in the following words:—" This assertion," that the word described by St. John in the beginning of his Gospel, " is directly against the Socinians, who affirm our blessed Saviour to be a mere man, and deny that He had any existence before He was born of the Virgin Mary: which position of theirs does perfectly contradict all the former conclusions which have been so evidently drawn from the description here given of the word: and not only so, but hath forced them to interpret this whole passage, in the beginning of St. John's Gospel, in a very different sense from that which was constantly received, not only by the ancient fathers, but by the general consent of all Christians 1500 years together; for to establish their opinion of our Saviour having no existence before his birth, they have found it necessary to expound this whole passage quite to another sense, and such as, by their own confession, was never mentioned by any Christian writer before Socinus. And surely it ought to be very considerable,

in this case, that the most ancient Christian writers, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and even Origen himself, who is called the father of interpreters, are most express and positive in this matter. For Ignatius was the scholar of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John; and Justin Martyr lived in the next age to that of the apostles. So that if this interpretation of Socinus be true, here are two things very wonderful, and almost incredible: First, that those who lived so very near St. John's time, and were most likely to know his meaning, should so widely mistake it: and then, that the whole Christian world should, for so many ages together, be deceived in the ground and foundation of so important an article of faith, if it were true; or, if it were not, should be led into so gross and dangerous an error as this must needs be, if Christ had no real existence before he was born into the world: and which would be necessarily consequent upon this, that no man did understand this passage of St. John aright before Socinus."

What Tillotson urges, in the above quotation, against the novelty of Socinian interpretations, applies with equal force against those who deny the Eternal Sonship of Christ. It is not enough to say that the opinion, which they now advocate, was never held in the purest ages of Christianity; but the very reverse was strongly maintained by the whole orthodox Church for 1700 years together. In the articles of faith, drawn up by the primitive Church, we are taught that Christ was not the Son of God merely by title and adoption, but the only truly begotten Son of God: not created, but generated of the Father before all worlds, and therefore styled God of God, Light of Light.* This was the doctrine taught from the beginning of the Christian dispensation, and what has continued to be the faith of every Christian community who have believed in the Divinity of Christ. And it would be a most marvellous thing indeed, if they should all have been so grossly mistaken for so long a time. But that they have been so far mistaken is what Dr. A. Clarke attempts to prove. The following is taken from his comment on Luke i. 31, &c.

5. " *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.* This conception " shall take place suddenly, and the Holy Ghost himself shall be the " grand operator. The power—the miracle-working power—of the " *Most High shall overshadow thee*, to accomplish this purpose, and " to protect thee from danger. As there is a plain allusion to the spirit " of God brooding over the face of the waters to render them prolific, " Gen. i. 2, I am the more firmly established in the opinion advanced " on Mat. i. 20, that the rudiments of the human nature of Christ was " a real creation in the womb of the Virgin, by the energy of the spirit " of God."

" *Therefore also that holy thing (or person) shall be called* " *the Son of God.*" " We may here plainly perceive, that the angel " does not give the appellation of Son of God to the divine nature of " Christ; but to that *holy person* or *thing* which was to be born of the

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* See Dr. Nares on the Three Creeds.

" Virgin, by the energy of the Holy Ghost. The divine nature could " not be born of the Virgin ; the human nature was born of her. The " divine nature had no beginning; it was God manifest in the flesh, 1 " Tim. iii. 16. It was that Word which being in the beginning (from " eternity) with God, John i. 2., was afterwards *made flesh*, (became " manifest in human nature) and tabernacled among us, John i. 14. Of " this divine nature the angel does not particularly speak here, but of the " *tabernacle* or *shrine* which God was now preparing for it, viz., the " holy thing that was to be born of the Virgin. Two natures must ever " be distinguished in Christ : the human nature, in reference to which He " is the Son of God and inferior to Him, Mark xiii. 32. John v. 19, " and xiv. 28. ; and the divine nature which was from eternity, and equal " to God, John i. 1, and x. 30. Rom. ix. 5. Col. i. 16—18. It is " true, that to Jesus the Christ, as He appeared among men, every cha- " racteristic of the divine nature is sometimes attributed, without appear- " ing to make any distinction between the divine and human natures ; " but is there any part of the Scriptures in which it is *plainly* said that " the divine nature of Jesus Christ was the Son of God ? Here, I trust, " I may be permitted to say, with all due respect to those who differ " from me, that the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship of Christ is, in my " opinion, antiscriptural, and highly dangerous ; this doctrine I reject for " the following reasons :

" I. I have not been able to find any express declarations in the " Scriptures concerning it.

" II. If Christ be the Son of God as to his *divine* nature, then He " cannot be eternal : for son implies a father ; and father implies, in re- " ference to son, precedency in time, if not in nature too. Father and " son imply the idea of *generation* ; and generation implies a *time* in " which it was effected, and time also anticedent to such generation.

" III. If Christ be the Son of God, as to his divine nature, then the " Father is of necessity *prior*, consequently *superior* to Him.

" IV. Again, if this divine nature were *begotten* of the father, then it " must be in *time* ; *i. e.*, there was a period in which He did not exist, " and a period when He *began* to exist. This destroys the eternity of " our Blessed Lord, and robs Him at once of his Godhead.

" V. To say that He was begotten from all eternity, is, in my opinion, " absurd, and the phrase *Eternal Son*, is a positive self-contradiction. " Eternity is that which had no beginning, nor stands in any reference " to time. Son supposes time, generation, and father ; and time also an- " ticedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of the two " terms, *son* and *eternity*, is absolutely impossible, as they imply essen- " tially different and opposite ideas." — " The enemies of Christ's " Divinity have in all ages availed themselves of this incautious method " of treating this subject, and on this ground, have ever had the advan- " tage of the defenders of the Godhead of Christ. This doctrine of the " *Eternal Sonship* destroys the Deity of Christ ; now if his Deity be " taken away, the whole Gospel scheme of Redemption is ruined. On " this ground, the Atonement of Christ cannot have been of infinite " merit, and consequently could not purchase pardon for the offences of " mankind, nor give any right to, or possession of, an eternal glory.

" The very use of this phrase is both absurd and dangerous; therefore " let all those who value Jesus and their salvation abide by the Scrip- " tures."

6. The Doctor here declares his sentiments without reserve, but with what truth and reason he supports his opinion will have to be examined. Those who take his advice in abiding by the Scriptures, will not imitate his example: for he does not content himself with what the Scriptures have said on the subject. The reasons he assigns for rejecting the doctrine of Christ's eternal Sonship are classed under five heads or divisions: but for what purpose such an arrangement is made does not appear; for his second, third, and fourth, do not differ from each other, and are for substance included in the fifth; hence the whole of his argument is contained in the first and the last. The former of which states that the doctrine he opposes is not founded on the Scriptures, and the latter declares it to be contrary to reason: both of which will require a reply after a few general observations.

We are here told, that " the enemies of Christ's Divinity have in all ages availed themselves of this incautious method of treating the subject, and on this ground, have ever had the advantage of the defenders of the Godhead of Christ." This shews, by the Doctor's own admission, that the Eternal Sonship has been taught in all ages, by all those who have defended the Godhead of Christ. But the most prominent feature in the statement is the extreme severity of the charge which he brings against the doctrine of Christ's Divine Sonship; not content with pronouncing it a positive self-contradiction, he asserts that it destroys the Deity of Christ, and ruins the whole scheme of Gospel redemption. If this charge can be substantiated it falls of course with all its overwhelming weight on those who have taught and defended it; including the most eminent Christian divines of all ages and nations. All who have attempted to prove the Divinity of Christ have destroyed his Godhead. They have, it seems inflicted upon it a death that never dies: hence every succeeding generation have had to repeat the same work of destruction. We might have expected that the utter ruin and destruction of the Godhead of Christ would have been as much as its enemies could have desired, but this has not been the case: for not being content with the perdition which the friends of this doctrine have inflicted upon it in all ages, its enemies have likewise assailed it, and in every encounter have had the advantage. The contest has been to determine whether Christ was possessed of proper Divinity, and the friends of this doctrine have always been vanquished by their adversaries.—Such for substance is the Doctor's statement; and the tremendous charge he brings against the defenders of the Godhead of Christ. But for the credit of Christianity, it is to be hoped, that this charge does not contain one shadow of truth, nor any particle of credibility.

Is it possible to believe, that all the Christian Fathers, including those who received their instruction from the apostles, have in all their defences of Christ's Divinity, destroyed his Godhead and ruined the scheme of Redemption; and that every succeeding generation of orthodox professors, have dealt the same deadly blows to the heart of Christianity? If the doctrine of Christ's Divinity has always been abhorred by its ene-

mies, and murdered by its friends, it should now be abandoned by common consent, for its friends can have nothing to hope from it, and its enemies nothing to fear.

The Deity of Christ and the scheme of Redemption contain every thing vital to Christianity; and if these doctrines have been destroyed in all ages, no part of the Christian system, worth preserving, can have escaped the slaughter. And is it not proper to ask what has become of all those who have made such havoc in the Church, and of those who have placed their dependance on a ruined system? We may now be warned to leave the old paths if we value our "*salvation*," but this cannot profit our predecessors.

The charge under consideration is more dreadful than that which belongs to the apostacy of the Romish Church: for that apostacy did not commence in the earliest ages of Christianity, nor was it ever at any period universal: there were always a considerable number who bore witness to the truth, and with whom it found a refuge. And the fault of that Church did not consist so much in destroying the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, as in making erroneous and superstitious additions to them. Therefore the corruptions of that community have not amounted to such a total destruction of Christian doctrines, as that which is now charged upon those who have vindicated the Godhead of Christ, for they are said to have ruined the Gospel scheme of Redemption, in all ages.

It has already been noticed, that Socinus gave a new exposition of the first chapter of St. John's Gospel; and if the sense he put upon the apostle's words could have been supported, it would have convicted all former expositors of the grossest errors, on the most important points of the Christian religion. As to the novelty of his opinion, says Tillotson, "Socinus himself makes no difficulty to own it." Speaking of the first verses of St. John's Gospel he says, "the true sense of which words seems to have been hid from all the expositors that ever were extant.—And Schlictingius after him, with more confidence, but much less decency, tells us, that concerning the meaning of those expressions, *in the beginning*, and of those which follow concerning the word, the ancient interpreters went so far from the Apostle's meaning as if they had rav'd and been out of their wits: which is so extravagantly said, and with so much contempt of those great and venerable names, who were the chief propagators of Christianity in the world, and to whom all ages do so justly pay a reverence, that nothing could be said in excuse of him, but only that it is not usual with him to fall into such rash and rude expressions." But if the Eternal Sonship of Christ be so absurd and dangerous a doctrine, as it is now stated to be, must not all former expositors of the Christian faith have raved and been out of their wits?

7. It has been seen what a severe and awful charge is brought against all orthodox Christians of every age and nation, and it now remains to consider how this charge is supported. It is stated, that the Eternal Sonship is a doctrine not found in Scripture, and contrary to reason: the latter argument may be first examined.

The Doctor's words on this subject are — "To say that He (Christ) "was *begotten* from all eternity, is, in my opinion, absurd; and the "phrase Eternal Son, is a positive self-contradiction." That is, the

doctrine that Christ in his divine nature is the Son of God, is contrary to reason. This argument is inconclusive and inadmissible, because it brings the subject before an incompetent tribunal, and whose jurisdiction in deciding on divine mysteries is not to be acknowledged. It is not the province of reason to decide on those points of religion which are incomprehensible. If we receive no article of faith which we cannot comprehend, we must commence open hostility with divine revelation in general: but if we admit that great is the mystery of godliness, then it follows, that there are doctrines to be believed of which human reason is not a competent judge. Reason has its own sphere of operations in the investigation of divine truth, but when it exceeds its bounds, it becomes a blind leader of the blind till both fall into the pit. Reason may discover that there is a God: but the manner of his existence is unknown. Whether it be essential to the Divine Being to have a son in his own image, is what unassisted human reason can with no propriety either affirm or deny.

The argument before us is, that the Son cannot be of equal duration with the Father. This is what all the opposers of Christ's Divinity have said since the beginning; and we admit it would be true if God was such a one as ourselves; but a Being that exists without a cause, must exist in a manner which to us is incomprehensible. It may therefore be essential to the Divine Being to have a son in his own nature from eternity. All reasoning from analogy on such a subject is futile and inconclusive, because we cannot discern where the dissimilarity between things human and divine commences, nor how far it extends.

How the Son of God can be of equal duration with the Father we shall not attempt to explain; but we may shew that the argument against the possibility of it, even in reference to things with which we are acquainted, does not prove the point for which it is produced. The sun produces light of equal duration with itself; if the substance of the sun had been eternal, light would have been so likewise. Two lines, having such an inclination as to meet in the same point, form an angle: but the angle so formed is as old as the lines by which it was produced.—We again affirm, that we are not attempting to explain the Sonship of Christ, for who can declare his generation? but these instances shew the weakness of the argument by which the doctrine is assailed.* But if it

* "But if the Son and Holy Ghost derive their nature from the Father, will it not follow that they must be posterior to Him in time, since every effect is posterior to its cause? No; this consequence seems to follow only by reasoning too closely from one nature to another; when there is between the two but a very distant analogy. It is true, indeed, that among men, every father must be prior in *time* as well as in the order of nature to his son; but were it essential to a man to be a father, so as that he could not exist otherwise than in that relation, it is obvious that his son would be coeval with himself, though still as proceeding from him he would be posterior in the order of nature. This is the case with all necessary causes and effects. The visible sun is the immediate and necessary cause of light and heat, either as emitting the rays from his own substance, or as exciting the agency of a fluid diffused for that purpose through the whole system. Light and heat, therefore, must be as old as the sun; and had he existed from all eternity, they would have existed from eternity with him, though still, as his effects,

was otherwise, if the argument, that whatever is produced must be posterior in time to that of which it is the production, was universally true as applied to earthly things, it does not follow that it is true when applied to things divine; for the nature of divine things, in many respects, are to us unsearchable and past finding out.

8. The phrase *Eternal Son* is declared to be a positive self-contradiction. But does not this involve the Scriptures in the same condemnation? for in Scripture we find the phrase, *Everlasting Father*. If either of these phrases contain a self-contradiction it must be the case with them both; and so far as we have the Scriptures for our guide we need not be afraid to defend our phraseology.

The phrase, Eternal Son, is said to be a contradiction, in order to induce us to relinquish the doctrine connected with it. But before we do this, it would be well to enquire what doctrines belonging to man's redemption can be retained by the same rule of interpretation. Those who reject the Eternal Sonship, for the reason assigned, would not wish to go so far as their own mode of argument would lead them. For instance, a Being self-existent and in all respects independent, is sent into the world by the authority and determinate counsel of another Being: the Person so sent makes satisfaction to the justice of another Person who was in all respects his equal: and He either made satisfaction to his own justice or it must remain unsatisfied. We are told that the Person so sent could only suffer in his human nature, which was finite, and yet He made infinite satisfaction. The sufferings of an innocent Person made satisfaction to Divine Justice for the guilty. If every guilty person had suffered all he was capable of, for myriads of ages, such sufferings could have made no satisfaction to Divine Justice, but yet the sufferings endured in human nature for a short period by one innocent person made full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. Every one of these propositions are believed and defended by Dr. Clarke; but were we to reason on them from analogy, as he does respecting the Sonship of Christ, we might pronounce every one of them a positive self-contradiction; and as such they are rejected by those who call themselves Unitarians; and on the same account they reject many others which we believe to be of the last importance. And, therefore, before we give up the Eternal Sonship, because it is said to be contrary to reason, we should see, whether, by the same mode of argument, we should have any doctrines left which would be worth contending for.

9. When those who oppose the Eternal Sonship declare it is contrary to reason, we reply, that we do not acknowledge the authority of the court before which the subject is brought: but if we did acknowledge it, this would afford them no advantage. If the cause came to be fairly tried it would be decided against them at the bar of reason: because, by renouncing this article their own creed becomes more irrational, as we shall proceed to shew.

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they would have been behind him in the order of nature." "The Nicene fathers illustrate the eternal generation of the second person of the blessed Trinity by this procession of light from the corporeal sun, calling him God of God, Light of Light."

The Scriptures ascribe Divine attributes, and whatever is essential and peculiar to the Deity, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. The Scriptures likewise declare that there is but one God; and that the Son is the only begotten of the Father, and that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, and is sent by the Son, and He is sometimes called the Spirit of the Father, and sometimes the Spirit of the Son. From hence we conclude that the Father is the Fountain of Deity, from whom the Son and Holy Spirit are in some ineffable manner derived: so as to partake of his essence without its being divided. On this ground we say there are three Persons and one God; which is more agreeable to reason than the supposition of three Beings originally distinct without any communication from one to the other, where there was no kind of derivation, for this would be to make them three Gods.

"Three persons consubstantial, co-eternal, co-ordinate, without derivation, subordination, or dependence of any sort as to nature or essence, is palpable polytheism; more palpable indeed than that of the Grecian philosophers, who, though they worshipped gods many and lords many, yet all held one God supreme over the rest." This great error, is what those who reject the Eternal Sonship cannot avoid, if they remain trinitarians. And hence by rejecting the Divine Sonship of Christ they make their creed more opposite to reason. "Let all who value Jesus and their salvation" avoid this fatal rock "and abide by the Scriptures."

We are commanded to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And we ask why the first is called the Father, and the second the Son? and the answer given by those who reject the Eternal Sonship is, that they have these appellations in reference to the miraculous conception which was effected by the Holy Ghost. We then ask again, if Christ be the Son of God only with respect to his incarnation, which was effected by the Holy Ghost, how is it that He is not called the Son of the Holy Ghost? for on the principle laid down, the first person of the Trinity is no more the Father of Christ than Christ is the father of himself. To this question no answer is returned, nor can they return any, without involving a positve self-contradiction. And thus it appears, that by rejecting the Divine Sonship of Christ, they make their creed irrational, out of compliment to reason. Reason decides for the Eternal Sonship of Christ, because it gives the most consistency to the doctrine of the Trinity, and the scheme of Redemption.

10. Dr. Clarke maintains, that the conjunction of the two terms, *Son* and *Eternity*, is absolutely impossible. That is, if Christ be the Son of God in his divine nature, He cannot be eternal in his duration. This is what he exerts all his power to prove; and if he does not prove this point, he proves nothing to the purpose for which the subject was introduced. And if he proves that Christ, as the Son of God, cannot be eternal, he proves more than he would wish to do; for he proves at the same time, that Christ, as the Word of God, cannot be eternal. If his arguments be allowed in the former case, they must inevitably be so in the latter. If the term *Son*, when applied to Christ, cannot be a character of divinity, neither can the term *Word* in Scripture denote our Saviour's divine nature; as will appear by adopting the same mode of argument in the latter case, which he has pursued in the former.

If Christ be the Word of God as to his *divine* nature, then He cannot be eternal: for word implies a *speaker;* and speaker implies, in reference to word, precedency in time, if not in nature too. Speaker and word imply the idea of utterance; and utterance implies a *time* in which it was effected, and *time* also antecedent to such utterance. If Christ be the Word of God as to his divine nature, then the speaker is of necessity prior, consequently *superior* to him. Again, if the divine nature of Christ were a word spoken by the Almighty, then it must be in *time;* that is, there was a period when the *word* did not exist, and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs Him at once of his Godhead. To say that the word was uttered from all eternity, is, in my opinion, absurd; and the phrase *Eternal Word*, is a positive self-contradiction. Eternity is that which had no beginning, nor stands in any reference to time. Word supposes time, utterance, and speaker; and time also antecedent to such utterance. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms *word* and eternity, is absolutely impossible; as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas. The enemies of Christ's Divinity might in all ages have availed themselves of this incautious method of treating the subject, and on this ground would ever have had the advantage of the defenders of the Godhead of Christ. This doctrine of the *eternal word* destroys the deity of Christ; now, if the Deity of Christ be taken away, the whole Gospel scheme of Redemption is ruined. The very use of the phrase *eternal word* is both absurd and dangerous; therefore, let all those who value Jesus and their salvation, abide by the Scriptures.

From what has now been stated, it will be seen, that every one of the Doctor's arguments against the eternity of the Son, applies with equal force against the eternity of the word; if they overturn either doctrine, they inevitably overturn both: and arguments which prove too much are fallacious. These arguments do not prove too much for Socinians, but they prove too much for Dr. Clarke; for he strongly contends for the eternity of the word. He says, "The divine nature (of Christ) had no "beginning; it was that word which, being in the beginning (from eter-"nity) with God, John, i. 2, was afterwards *made flesh*." This, to say the least of it, is palpable inconsistency; and what makes it more glaring and conspicuous, he not only declares the word to be eternal in the very place where he is maintaining that the term Son, as applied to Christ, cannot be a designation of divinity, but he likewise uses the eternity of the word as an argument against the Eternal Sonship; which is not only maintaining both sides of a contradiction, but making one the reason of the other. To preserve any degree of consistency, he must either renounce the eternity of the word, or admit the Eternal Sonship.

11. When it is requisite to demolish a building, it may not be needful to break every fragment: but it may not be improper to prosecute the subject a little more in detail. The Doctor tells us, that the divine nature of Christ could not be born of the Virgin. But how is this proved, and for what purpose is it advanced? It is admitted, that the divine nature was so united with the human, as to constitute one person, and if this union was the work of the Holy Spirit in the miraculous conception, then one of the natures could not be born without the other. If

it could be proved, that the divine nature of Christ could not be born of the Virgin, it surely would not prove that He was not begotten of the Father before all worlds. And his being the son of Mary in his human nature, does not prove that He was not the Son of God in his divine nature.

The Doctor says, " If the *divine nature* were begotten of the Father, " then it must be in time. This destroys the eternity of our blessed " Lord." In this way he attempts to prove, that the divine nature of Christ could not be begotten of the Father. This is exactly what Mahomet asserts in the Koran ; and what he appears to have learned from some who had called themselves Christians, but who were such enemies to the doctrine of the Trinity, that they were prepared to unite with that impostor, and lend him their aid to oppose the orthodox faith. But the objection, that the divine nature could not be begotten, is much older than Mahomet, and the answer which the ancient Christians returned to it was, If you will tell us how the Father was unbegotten, we will tell you how the Son was begotten. This was a proper reply, for the former position which the objectors admitted, was altogether as incomprehensible as the latter which they objected.

The Doctor says, " If Christ be the Son of God, as to his divine " nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior to " Him." When he asserts, that superiority is the consequence of priority, he is not sufficiently intelligible. If he confines this superiority to precedency in time, then he only asserts, that if the Father be prior, then he is consequently prior, which is an attempt to make something out of nothing. But if he means to assert any other kind of superiority, then we deny the consequence. For one thing may be before another, without being in any other respect superior.* A son may not be inferior to his father in any kind of talents, whether natural or acquired, otherwise every generation would be inferior to that which preceded it. With respect to the necessity of the father being prior to the son, it is an argument, when applied to the divine existence, which has already been overthrown.

12. Before we leave the argument drawn from reason against the doc-

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* A superiority in the order of nature is to be attributed to the Father: and many venerable divines have been of opinion that Christ spake of his divine nature, when He said, " my Father is greater than I." On this passage, Burket says, " The Father may be said to be greater than Christ in regard to his paternity, as being the fountain of the Deity: the Father is of himself, but the Son is begotten of the Father; but being of the same substance with the Father, he is consequently God, as the Father is God; for the inequality arises not from the essence, but from the order and manner of subsistence. Thus the Father was greater than he — greater as to his original, the son being begotten by him: and greater is he that gives, than he that receives; but, as to his essence, they are both one God, and so equal."

Pearson says, " What the Father is, he is from none; what the Son is, he is from Him. Upon this pre-eminence may be grounded the congruity of the Divine mission. We often read that Christ was sent; but we never read that the Father was sent, there being an authority in that name which seems inconsistent with this Mission."

trine under consideration, it will be needful to notice some other writers on the same side of the question, and to point out the pernicious tendency of their writings. Socinians are capable of doing more injury to Christianity than avowed infidels; and in like manner, those who oppose the Eternal Sonship of Christ, may militate more effectually against the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, than its open adversaries; because they carry the ensign of friendship, and under such colours, are not so likely to excite alarm; and they play off their destructive artillery within the city, and under cover of the fortress; and inadvertently open the gates to the enemy. We say nothing against the purity of their motives; we only speak of consequences. The following is a specimen of their manner of handling the subject:—

"The doctrine of the eternal communication of the divine nature ap-
"pears to be involved in insurmountable difficulties; for the Son and
"Spirit must either have existed, or not existed, prior to the act of com-
"municating the divine nature to them. Now, if the Son and Spirit
"existed prior to their reception of the divine nature, they must have so
"existed as inferior beings; but if they did not exist previous to it, then
"they could not be eternal in their duration; and consequently, in either
"case, they could not, either one or both of them, be the Eternal God."

The reader might suspect, by the preceding paragraph, that we were drawing off the very dregs of the Socinian school. The Socinians reason in the same manner, only they do it more consistently, when they employ this mode of argument to overthrow the whole Trinitarian system. But the writers whom we have quoted, profess at the same time to believe the doctrine of the Trinity, of three persons in the Godhead, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; but do they ever expect to place this doctrine within the limits of any finite capacity, or to reconcile it to the dictates of human reason? The denial of the Eternal Sonship necessarily leads them to disclaim all communication of essence from the Father to the Son and the Spirit; consequently in their Trinity they have three persons who, in substance, nature, or essence, are originally distinct and independent, each existing of himself only, and each possessed of omnipotence; but a being possessed of omnipotence has ability to preserve himself, and to annihilate every other being in the universe, and reason demonstrates that there can be only one Being of this description in existence. What will our opponents make of the other two, or how will they dispose of them. They found the doctrine of the Trinity a venerable mystery, and they leave it a palpable absurdity. Hence the communication of the divine essence from the Father to the Son, is not only supported by Scripture, but likewise by reason, as far as the doctrine of the Trinity is concerned, because three persons cannot be one God on any other supposition, and where we have only a choice of difficulties, reason dictates that we should choose the least.

The preceding quotation, from the opposers of the Eternal Sonship, shows that when they attempt to reason on the subject, they sometimes fall into egregious mistakes. They say, "the doctrine of the eternal communication of the divine nature appears to be involved in insurmountable difficulties," for "if the son and spirit existed prior to their reception of the divine nature, they must have existed as in-

erior beings." But we ask how can persons be supposed to exist, previous to the substance of which they consist? How can they be supposed to exist prior to an *eternal* communication? No rational supposition can admit of time previous to eternity. If a supposition could be made, of their existing prior to eternity, it would not follow that they existed as inferior beings: for if a being could be supposed to exist prior to eternity, he would be superior to every other, whose existence was *only* eternal. They proceed to say, " If they did not exist previous to it," (the eternal communication,) " they could not be eternal in their duration." This is such a manifest contradiction, in their own words, as we could not have expected to have met with any where. Whatever exists by an eternal communication, must of necessity be eternal in duration. What they affirm is, that if a thing be not older than eternity itself, it cannot be eternal. The doctrine of the eternal communication of the divine nature most evidently involves them in insurmountable difficulties: it places such a gulf between their own speculations and right reason, that there can never be any communication from the one to the other.

Our opponents (as for convenience we call them,) sometimes speak with great propriety, and to give them the credit of it, we insert the following specimen :—" The precise manner in which the three persons ' of the Holy Trinity have existed from eternity, —the omniscience, om- ' nipresence, omnipotence, &c. of the Divine Being, are all subjects ' which lie far beyond the reach of the human intellect: and for man to ' write or speak on these subjects dogmatically—to assert that it must be ' so—it cannot be otherwise, &c., is to speak unadvisedly, or presumptu- ' ously, or worse. When the sacred Scriptures leave us on these deeply ' mysterious subjects, we lose our only safe guide, and it becomes us ' suddenly to pause, and humbly to adore. Presuming further on these " subjects than the Scriptures guide us, we soon become bewildered; ' and, though a man thus bewildered, may make a wonderful display of ' his metaphysical skill and powers of ratiocination, still he is bewil- ' dered; and may be properly addressed in the language of Zophar the ' Naamathite, Job. xi. 7. 8, ' Canst thou by searching find out God? " ' Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as " ' heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou " ' know?' "

How forcible are right words? All the sentiments contained in the preceding extract have our most cordial approbation; and we say, as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy. But if our opponents had been guided by the rule which they prescribe to others, they would not have agitated the present question, they would not have advocated a novel opinion founded on metaphysical speculations. They most notoriously violate their own rule, when they assert that Christ in his divine nature cannot be the only begotten of the Father; that if Christ be the Son of God as to his divine nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently *superior* to Him. Is not this, to speak unadvisedly, or presumptuously, or worse, on subjects which lie far beyond the reach of the human intellect. If there be any impropriety in the exercise of metaphysical skill on theological subjects, the

blame rests with those who first introduced it into the present controversy. When metaphysical objections are made to established doctrines, they may be properly met by replies of the same description. And though metaphysical skill cannot explain the mysteries of the Gospel, it may overturn the objections by which those mysteries have been assailed.

13. The rule of interpretation laid down in the preceding extract breathes the spirit of Christian modesty and humility, which does not affect to be wise above what is written ; but how far our opponents deviate from it may be seen by what follows, where they say, " Can that " which is eternal be begotten, produced, or receive life, as the gift of " another ? Can that which is independent depend like an effect upon " its cause, like light upon the sun, or the flowing of a stream from the " fountain ? Can the Supreme God learn obedience by suffering, or " become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ? Can that " which is subject to death be eternal ? St. Paul declares that the Son " of God was made of a woman ; therefore, the Son of God thus " made, could not, as a Son, possibly be eternal. Mr. Wesley declares " our redemption is by the death of the only begotten Son of God. " By confining the term Son to the divine nature, the advocates of the " Eternal Sonship make Mr. Wesley declare, that he has killed the " Supreme God himself."

This is in direct opposition to the rule of discussion which they prescribe to others. In this place, when they meet with a difficulty, they do not suddenly pause and humbly adore, but labour as much to display metaphysical skill and the powers of ratiocination, as if they could by searching find out God to perfection. And they so far transgress the bounds of decorum, as to speak in a strain that is next to impious, when they use such revolting language as killing the Eternal God himself.

It is by a sacrifice of all modesty and veracity, that they charge the defenders of the Eternal Sonship with making Mr. Wesley say, that he has killed the Supreme: for they cannot make it appear that any construction is put on Mr. Wesley's words, which he did not put on them himself. They did not like to appear as avowed adversaries to Mr. Wesley ; and, therefore, mask their decided opposition to his doctrine, under a pretence that others have put a wrong construction upon his words, which is a very visible, and a contemptible subterfuge.

Mr. Wesley most distinctly states, that Christ was the Son of God from Eternity, and likewise that our redemption is by the death of the only begotten Son of God ; but in this there is no contradiction.

The advocates of the Eternal Sonship are charged with making Mr. Wesley say he has killed the Supreme, " by *confining* the term Son to the divine nature ;" but this charge is manifestly false, for they do not *confine* the term Son to the divine nature : they maintain that the term Son applies both to the human and divine nature of Christ, which most assuredly is not *confining* it to one of them,—the fabric, therefore, which is raised on this false foundation, falls to the ground.

In reference to these words of St. Paul, " God sent forth his Son made of a woman," our opponents say " therefore the Son of God " thus made, could not, as a Son, possibly be eternal." We ask, who-

ever supposed that He could? As made of a woman He was human but this circumstance, to those who admit his divinity, cannot afford the shadow of a reason against his being the Son of God in his divine nature. If the word, which was from eternity with God, was made flesh, then as a Son begotten before all worlds, He might be sent forth in the fulness of time made of a woman.

In reference to the declaration that our redemption is by the death of the only begotten Son of God, they ask, "Can that which is subject to death be eternal?" If there be any difficulty in this case, it equally belongs to their side of the question, for they admit that He was eternal, and that He died on the cross. On this ground they raise difficulties, where none in reality exist. The human and divine natures in Christ constituted one person, not two; but what is affirmed of Him in Scripture sometimes belonged exclusively to one of these natures, and sometimes to the other. To the Son, he saith, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth:" but of this Son, it is likewise said, that He grew in wisdom and in stature. The former of these declarations could only belong to his divine nature, and the latter to his human. The Socinian cavil on this point, is easily refuted, for there is no impropriety in saying that Christ was God's eternal Son; and likewise that He was subject to death: for this only implies that He was eternal in one nature, and mortal in another. We are told that the rich man died and was buried, and that Lazarus died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; but it was the body only of the former that was buried, and the soul of the latter that was taken to heaven. It is consequently proper to speak of Christ being subject to death, though in his divine nature, He was eternally the Son of God. Hence, all that has been said about making Mr. Wesley kill the Supreme, vanishes away, as to any support it can give to their side of the question. But our opponents on this point are weaving Socinian snares for themselves; and though they are mere cobwebs, yet, as they produce them for arguments, this will give them validity when they come to be employed against themselves; they will then find that they have furnished their adversaries with destructive weapons, and afforded them such shelter, that they cannot be attacked, till their own works are first demolished.

They ask, "Can the Supreme God become obedient unto death?" It has been shewn how this can be done, as it only implies that he was divine in one nature, and mortal in the other. The question cannot affect the Eternal Sonship, unless it is intended to overthrow his divinity. If Christ, notwithstanding his divine nature, could become obedient unto death, then, as the Eternal Son, He might learn or *teach* obedience by what He suffered.

14. Our opponents proceed as follows:—"The same hostility exists 'against the disciples of Christ. St. Peter, Acts, iii. 13, says, the God 'of our fathers hath glorified his son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, 'and killed, the Prince of Life, whom God raised from the dead. I 'ask, Does the term Son designate the divinity of Christ, as the advo-'cates for the Eternal Sonship declare? Was it the Eternal God 'that was delivered up, killed, and raised from the dead? or was it the 'man Christ Jesus, who is here called the Son of God? It could be

" no other. This was the doctrine which the Apostles taught, and to sup-
" port which, they counted not their lives dear; and yet, notwithstanding
" this testimony, and the sufferings by which it was attested, we are told,
" that the term Son, as applied to Jesus, is a title of absolute divinity;
" in other words, that God himself was delivered up, killed, and raised
" from the dead." All this, for substance, has been answered in the preceding paragraphs; but it requires a few additional remarks. In reference to Acts, iii. 13, our opponents affirm, that the term Son does not apply to the divine nature, but to the man Christ Jesus. Allowing this to be correct, it is no argument in their favour; because, what the term may signify in one passage, does not fix the sense of it in all others. We admit that the term Son applies both to the human and divine nature of Christ; but they maintain that this term never applies to the divine nature. Consequently, if they can produce a thousand passages where the term Son denotes the human nature of Christ, it does not furnish the shadow of an argument against our cause; but if we produce a single passage where the term Son applies to the divine nature of Christ, their whole system is exploded at once; and such passages we shall produce, when we come to examine the Scriptures on this subject.

In the preceding quotation, a very extraordinary charge is brought against the defenders of the Eternal Sonship. They are said to discover " hos-
" tility against the disciples of Christ." And this charge, however heavy and dreadful, must be allowed to be just, if the indictment can be supported by evidence. The plain English of the preceding statement made by our opponents is, that the Apostles taught that Christ was the Son of God as to his human nature only; that this was the doctrine which they uniformly taught, and for which they suffered. Consequently, it is hostility to them to assert that Christ was the Son of God as to his divine nature. But by what evidence is this charge supported? In preaching the doctrine here specified, whom had the Apostles to contend with? Were the Jews such strenuous advocates for the Divine Sonship of Christ, as to persecute the Apostles for preaching his human sonship? If so, they must have been greatly changed from the time they charged Christ with blasphemy, because, He said God was his father, which, in their account, was making himself equal with God. And the doctrine of the human sonship, was no more likely to offend the Gentiles than the Jews, as it must have corresponded with their own notions, much better than the opposite doctrine. It is certain that this doctrine is never mentioned in Scripture as the cause of their persecutions. Our opponents, therefore, on this subject, speak without book, and exceed all the bounds of credibility.

Another charge brought forward by our opponents is as follows:— They say, " It is amusing to see what ingenuity is employed in proving
" this doctrine (Eternal Sonship) from Scripture. The eighth chapter
" of the Proverbs is brought forward for the purpose; unfortunately, the
" person there speaks in the feminine gender, and describes herself as a
" child growing at her father's side. And yet this lady is positively
" said to be the Son of God."

This is a burlesque on the sacred Scriptures. The person who speaks, we are told, was a lady; but, we ask, what lady could say, By me kings

reign, and princes decree justice. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, &c.? The exposition of this passage is not our concern at present. But if the person speaking is to be taken for a lady, what reverence can we have for the book in which such a passage is contained? If the person speaking be a created being, how can it be said, that the Lord possessed her in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old, and that she was set up from everlasting? If this person be uncreated, then we have a female deity, exercising divine attributes, and governing the world. In this case, what becomes of the doctrine of the Trinity, if there be another person possessing divine attributes, besides Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? And what becomes of the Scriptures, if they can either speak of such a deity, or use such language of a creature?

15. We now return to Dr. Clark, who tells us, that he rejects the Eternal Sonship, because he has "not been able to find any express de- "clarations in the Scriptures respecting it." It appears from this, that he has not been able to find any express declarations in Scripture against the doctrine which he has rejected. Is express declaration any criterion of Scriptural doctrine? We believe the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, of the Christian Sabbath, and of infant baptism, to be Scriptural, though they are not by such words expressed in Scripture. What is evidently implied, is as really the doctrine of Scripture as what is expressed. That the dead are raised, Moses shewed at the bush, as our Saviour informs us; but this was not by any express declaration concerning it. By this we learn, from an infallible commentator, that a doctrine may be established by the Scriptures, when there is no express declaration respecting it.

If there be three persons and one God, there must be some distinction in their manner of existence, and that distinction must have been eternal;* and the only designation we can find in Scripture of this distinction, is by the terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And it is most reasonable to suppose, that these terms are expressive of their original existence.

St. Austin, as quoted by Nares, says, "Observe, that when in the creed, to the name of God, the Father is conjoined, it is thereby declared that he was not first a God and afterwards a Father, but without any beginning he is both God and Father: when thou hearest the word Father, acknowledge that he hath a Son truly born, or begotten. God the Father is a term of a secret mystery, whose true Son is the Word."

With respect to the Holy Spirit, He is said to proceed from the

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* Since there are three who are one God, and these three are distinct persons, there must be something which distinguishes them from each other; and that distinction be it what it may, is not merely nominal, as when the Sabellians say, God is one person, having three names, Father, Son, and Spirit; here is no distinction. A man may have three names, and yet be no more distinguished from other men, than by one name. Nor is the distinction merely in mode or manner of existing. The three in the Godhead are not merely three modes, but three distinct persons in a different mode of subsisting, and are really distinct from each other; so that the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father, nor the Holy Spirit either the Father or the Son: but the difficulty is, what that is which

Father, to be sent by the Father; and it is said the Lord, by his spirit, hath garnished the heavens; but the Father is never said to proceed from

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gives the distinction between them? Now, observe,—1st. Be it what it may which makes the distinction, it must be as early as the existence of the divine nature itself. God is from everlasting to everlasting. What God is now, He ever was, the immutable "I am." He is He which is, and was, and is to come: He is invariably the same: and therefore that which gives them their distinction, must be coeval with their existence.

2d. Whatever, therefore, distinguishes them, does not depend upon any works done by them in time, since their distinction is eternal; and the Scriptures assert, that the works of God are common to all the three persons, and that they have a concern in each; and therefore these cannot distinguish them from each other. The salvation of sinners is commonly ascribed to the Son, and He is commonly called Jesus our Saviour; and God the father is said to beget men again, according to his mercy, and is God our Saviour. The works of God may be proof that there is a glorious God; but these do not make God to be; but to appear to be what He is: had they never been done, He would have been the same as He is, in Being and Glory. The works of God, whether of creation or redemption, are works of sovereign pleasure. "For thy pleasure they are." These things might or might not have been, as He thought meet or fit; but not so his being, the nature of his being and its manner of subsisting. For suppose these works of nature or of grace had never been; God would have been the same in his nature, three persons in one essence. In the plan of man's salvation, to which some ascribe the distinction of persons as originating thence, the plural distinction is not made but manifested,—the distinction is not artificial but essential and natural, what could not be otherwise, no more than the essence itself. It existed, therefore, before the work either of creation or redemption; and, therefore, would have continued so, had there been no redemption. As the Divine existence is not a matter of choice or will, which to admit would imply another and a separate antecedent to him, so neither is that which gives the distinction what might or might not have been but by necessity of nature, as God is such, is the mode in which He is eternal and unchangeable. Observe, by necessity of nature, is not meant that the nature distinguishes them—that nature is one and common to Father, Son, and Spirit, and this nature is not divided; it is not parted among them, as that one might have a greater, and one a lesser, but the whole fulness of the Godhead is in each.

3. It is the personal relations, or distinctive relative properties in each person which distinguishes them from each other, as paternity in the first person, filiation in the second, and aspiration in the third. There the distinction arises from something in the divine nature, and not from without, and that something is couched in the word generation, Psalm ii. 7, which is peculiar to the first, and is never affirmed of the second and third; and upon this is founded the propriety of the name Father, and it is being begotten that founds the personal relation of the second person, the only begotten of the Father, which distinguishes him from the first and third, and gives him the name Son, and the relative property, or relation of the third is, that He is breathed of the first and second persons; hence called the breath of the Almighty, and is never said of the other persons, and so distinguishes him from them, and gives him the name of Spirit. Thus the names Father, Son, and Spirit, denote realities worthy the confidence of sinners. But it is urged that this renders the Son later in existence than the Father, as that a father who begets must be before him that is generated, and therefore the Son of God has a beginning, and so not from everlasting. But it is worthy of notice, that Father and Son are co-relatives, they suppose each other, a Father a Son, and a Son a Father. These relations commence and exist together; one is not absent from the other. The Father, as a Father, is not before the Son as such, nor the Son, as a Son, later than the Father. Their relations rise and continue together; there is no priority or posterity, no before or after in these relations. With God is no past existence of him that is begotten, nor pre-existence of him that begets. An Eternal Father must have an Eternal Son.

the Spirit, nor to be sent by the Spirit, nor is the Spirit ever said to do any thing by the Father. Does not this indicate that the Spirit is essentially distinct, and that the proper appellation of that distinction is that of Holy Spirit? With respect to the Son, it is said He was God, and was with God in the beginning; that He was in the form of God, and had a glory with the Father before the world was; that He was the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his Father's person; and do not these declarations indicate that He was eternally distinct in the mode of his existence from the Father, and that the designation of that distinction is the term *Son?*

If Christ be not the Son of God, as to his divine nature, He is not in reality the Son of God at all. Two celebrated writers, about the eighth century, maintained that Christ was not the Son of God by nature, but only by adoption: and those who deny his Eternal Sonship, revive for substance this exploded error. Created beings are only called the sons of God by grace and favour. Angels are figuratively called the sons of God; but if they were his sons in reality, then fallen angels would continue to be his sons. If creation really makes God a father, then the brute creation are the sons of God, and this appellation applies to the wicked as well as the righteous, for we are all his offspring. And if the Sonship of Christ be restricted to his human nature, it will follow, that He is only the Son of God in common with other men, and that He is not in reality the Son of God, but has that title given him by grace and favour.

17. Under the old dispensation, it was understood that God had a son. In the second Psalm, Christ is described as a king, who was to have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. And the Almighty declares Him to be his son, and calls upon the kings and judges of the earth to give the Son the testimony of their homage and subjection, lest they should perish; and He adds, "blessed are they that put their trust in Him." This conveyed the idea that God had a son in his own likeness.

Many eminent divines have proved that the description of wisdom, in the eighth of Proverbs, relates to Christ, and what is there said is not applicable to any other person or thing. It is there said, "From the beginning, or ever the earth was, when there were no depths, I was brought forth." And the word rendered brought forth, signifies travail, or to give birth to, and might have been rendered born or generated. In this place, therefore, we read of his eternal generation. Accordingly the Jewish writers speak of the generation of wisdom, which they call the Word of God, and they declare that word to be the first born of God, the creator of the world: the Son of God: the Son of God that conducted Israel through the wilderness.*

Prov. xxx. 4. Agur says, "Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" This indicates that God had a son, whose name was as mysterious as his own. The name of God, in Scripture, signifies that which

* See Allix's Judgment of the Jewish Church, page 195.

expresses or manifests his nature ; and the second person mentioned here, with respect to the mystery of his divine nature, is called God's son. The prophet Isaiah says, " Unto us a child is born, unto us a *son is given*, and his name shall be called Mighty God," &c. And what is most naturally suggested by these words is, that Christ in his human nature was the child born, and in his divine nature the son given, on which account He might be properly called Immanuel, God with us. Nebuchadnezzar was favoured with divine visions and revelations, and on a certain occasion he saw one, whose form was like the Son of God. Daniel, who records this, had evidently no idea that God could not have a son in his divine nature. The language of Scripture, therefore, most obviously indicated that God had a son in his own nature, and it is most certain that in this sense it was understood by the ancient Jews.

One of the most extraordinary passages to be found in the Scriptures is Micah v. 2. But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting. The margin renders the last clause, from the days of eternity, which is a literal version of the Hebrew. It is admitted that these words are a prediction of Christ. The principal point we shall endeavour to ascertain is, what is meant by his coming or going forth. The Jews understood this word to denote the Saviour's birth. When Herod requested to be informed where Christ should be born, they produced this passage to prove that Bethlehem was to be the place of his nativity. But it is declared that he had had a previous going forth, which had been from the days of eternity. The same word in the original, which is used for his birth in Bethlehem, is used to denote his eternal production, derivation, coming forth, or what ever it may be called. The original word is frequently used in Scripture to denote issue or offspring: it signifies that which proceeds from something else, that which is produced or *born*. This word is used to denote the flowing of a stream from the fountain, Gen. ii. 10. The diffusion of light by the rising sun, Psalm lxv. 8. The growing up of a branch from the root, Job xxxviii. 27. The flowing forth of waters into the depths prepared for them at the creation, Job xxxviii. 8. It is likewise used to denote the birth of children, Gen. xvii. 6.; 2 Kings xx. 18. It is used to denote the birth of Christ, Isaiah xi. 1. In the words before us, it most evidently signifies our Saviour's eternal generation. It is applied to our Saviour's divine nature, and no sense can be made of it, but that He was begotten of the Father before all worlds. Thus we find in the Scriptures the doctrine of our Saviour's Eternal Sonship.

18. We have seen that the Old Testament held out the idea of Christ being the Son of God in his divine nature, that the Jews believed this doctrine, as their writings abundantly testify. They were known to believe this when Christ commenced his public ministry, and when the gospels and epistles were written by the evangelists and apostles. How is it then that the opinion was never contradicted in any part of the New Testament. The opinion of God having a son in his own nature, is of the greatest importance in the judgment, both of those who oppose it, and of those who defend it. Those who oppose this opinion declare it

to be absurd and dangerous, destructive to the Deity of Christ, and ruinous to the whole scheme of Gospel redemption. If such an opinion as this was held by those who sat in Moses's seat, and expounded the law to the people, is it not marvellous, that neither Christ nor any of his apostles ever contradicted it? It cannot be denied that they frequently discoursed on the Sonship of Christ, and if they knew that so dangerous an opinion was held respecting it, can it be believed that they would never have spoken one word for its refutation?

Though the Jews believed that God had a son in his own nature, they would not believe that Christ was that person. They seem to have imbibed a notion from the prophecy of Daniel, that the Messiah would descend with a visible glory in the clouds of heaven: they demanded this sign from heaven, and because it was not given they refused to believe.

Our Saviour was so far from refuting the opinion that God had a Son in his own nature that He abundantly confirmed it. The Jews charged him with blasphemy when He said God was his own or his proper Father, for they inferred that He thereby made Himself equal with God. This was not a denial on their part that God could have such a Son, but they would not allow Christ to be that person, because He had not given the sign they expected. 1 Cor. i. 22—24. But if the Jews had here said that God could not have such a Son, it would not affect our argument, it would only shew that they were inconsistent with themselves, denying at one time what they affirmed at another. In the answer our Saviour returned there is no intimation that the Jews had drawn a wrong inference from the Sonship He claimed. There was nothing to convince them that by calling God his own Father He did not make Himself equal with God. So far from denying his Divine Sonship, He confirmed it in the clearest manner. He said, as the Father hath life in Himself, so He hath given the Son to have life in Himself. Whatsoever the Father hath is mine. Whatsoever doeth the Father that doeth the Son. I and my Father are one. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten that is in the bosom of the Father, He hath revealed Him. No man knoweth the Son but the Father, so no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.—These various passages speak for themselves without comment, they shew that the Jews drew a proper inference from the Sonship which our Saviour claimed when they said He made Himself equal with God. Consequently these passages prove that Christ is the Son of God as to his divine nature.

The Apostles did not contradict the notion which the Jews had entertained that God had a Son in his own nature, but expressed themselves so as to confirm what the Jews had taught on the subject. Philo, stating the opinion of the Jewish Church, calls the Second Person of the Trinity, God's first born Son: and St. Paul calls him God's first begotten. Philo calls the Logos the image of God: and St. Paul declares him to be the image of the invisible God. Philo says the Logos was the Son of God that led Israel through the wilderness, which the apostle confirms when he says the Jews tempted Christ in the wilderness. Philo calls the Second Person both the Word of God and the Son of God, and declares that He created

the world. And St. John speaks of Him in the same manner when he says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The world was made by Him: and without Him was not any thing made that was made. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The glory that distinguished Him to be the Son of God was the evidence of his divine nature which appeared in his words and actions, tempers and dispositions. It was no Sonship in his human nature that was thus beheld. He might have had all the glory spoken of had He come into the world by natural generation, or his human nature might have been produced in the miraculous manner recorded by St. Luke, without having the glory which St. John speaks of. Consequently that glory could not prove Him to be the only begotten of the Father, any other way than as he was the Son of God in his divine nature. We see, therefore, that the apostles confirmed the opinion which the Jews had held, that God had a Son in his own nature: and if that opinion was absurd and dangerous the Apostles were absurd and dangerous writers.

19. To overthrow the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship, our opponents bring forward a passage in Luke, i. 35. But this passage will not answer their purpose. When a Socinian produces a passage which calls Christ a man, we reply that it accords with our belief, but it no more proves that Christ was not God, than another passage which calls Him God, proves him not to be a man. In like manner, a passage which calls Christ the Son of God in reference to his human nature perfectly agrees with the Eternal Sonship.

It is pleaded that it is on account of the miraculous operations of the Spirit in the production of the human nature, that He is called the Son of God. This may be granted, but this does not prove that He was not the Son of God before his incarnation. He is called the Son of God in reference to his resurrection, but it will be allowed that though He is called the Son of God, on that account, that He was the Son of God before He was raised from the dead. And by a parity of reason when He is called the Son of God in reference to his incarnation, it does not follow that He was not the Son of God before that event took place.

Dr. Clarke, in his comment on this passage, says "of his divine nature the angel does not particularly speak here." But if the angel speaks generally, or any way whatever of the divine nature, is it not under the appellation of the Son of God? If the angel says nothing here about the divine nature, then he says nothing against the divine Sonship.

Our version of this passage, assigns, as is supposed, the miraculous production of his human nature as the cause of his being called the Son of God; but Guyse, instead of "*therefore also*," translates "*even because;*" and the passage when so rendered does not make his extraordinary birth the reason of his being called the Son of God; but it declares his being the Son of God to be the reason of his extraordinary birth. Why the angel should tell Mary that because of Christ's miraculous birth He should be called the Son of God remains to be accounted for. What could be the intent or importance of such a communication? And we ask whether the declaration has been verified in fact? It does

not appear that He is ever in any other part of Scripture called the Son of God in reference to that event. If it be replied that the meaning is not merely that He should have this appellation given Him on that account, but that He should by that means be the Son of God. But neither is this strictly true: He did not by that means become the Son of God only in a figurative manner, and in common with others.

Dr. Clarke says, "I am the more firmly established in the opinion 'that the rudiments of the humanity of Christ was a real creation by 'the Spirit of God." Granting this to be correct, it follows that in his opinion, Christ is only the Son of God by creation, as Adam was, and indeed as every other man is, for He has made us, and not we ourselves. But if this was all the angel Gabriel meant when he said Christ should be called the Son of God, what could be the use or import of the communication? The title in this case could be no exclusive honour to Christ as all men are the sons of God by creation. And if the angel had never mentioned it, his right on that ground to be called the Son of God would never have been questioned. We expect some important meaning in a message from heaven, and if the passage be understood to mean that Christ should have a miraculous conception, because He was the Son of God, then it conveys a sense of vast importance, worthy the messenger that brought it, and the place from whence it came.

If the passage be taken as it is in our version, there is no necessity to allow the construction that is put upon it. The meaning might be, not that the manner of his conception made Him the Son of God, but that it discovered Him to be so; as He was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead. It was predicted that a virgin should bear a son whose name should be Immanuel, God with us, but only one person was to be brought forth in this miraculous manner, and, therefore, whenever such an event transpired the person so brought forth might be known to be the Son of God; and the circumstance which made known what He was, might be said to be the cause of his being called the Son of God.

On this passage our opponents build their superstructure, but we have shewn that the sense which they put upon it, if admitted, does not disprove the Eternal Sonship. It has likewise been shewn that the passage is capable of another translation, which totally changes the meaning of it: and that if our own version be considered correct, the words will bear another construction which contains a more important meaning than that which they put upon it; and in this manner their very foundation is taken away.

20. The Sonship of Christ is distinguished from all others in the Scriptures: He is not only called God's own Son, his dear Son, and his well-beloved Son, but He is likewise called the first begotten, and the only begotten of the Father. But if his Sonship be confined to his human nature, or to any circumstance connected with it, He was neither the first nor the only begotten of the Father. His miraculous conception was not a greater deviation from the course of nature, nor a greater display of divine power, nor in any way more immediately the work of the Almighty, than the formation of the first man out of the dust; in reference to which circumstance St. Luke calls Adam, the son of God. With respect to his

resurrection, that did not in reality make His Sonship, but declared him to be the Son of God; as it was the fulfilment of prophecy; as it was such an evident interposition of heaven in favour of his cause; and as it was such a confirmation of his claims to that title. But in whatever way the resurrection might be said to constitute Him the Son of God, it was not peculiar to Himself, many others have been raised from the dead. His being the Messiah could not entitle Him to be called the only begotten, because there were other Messiahs or annointed ones. Therefore unless Christ is the Son of God as to his divine nature, He is neither God's first nor his only begotten Son.

In those places where men were induced to make an open confession that Christ was the Son of God, there is not the most distant allusion to the manner in which his human nature was produced. In most cases it was impossible the speakers could have any knowledge of that circumstance; where it might have been known, it was never that circumstance which produced the confession, but invariably some display of the divine nature. When He manifested his omniscience, when He displayed his power by walking on the waters, and discovering that the winds and the seas obeyed him, when the sun was darkened and nature convulsed at the crucifixion: on these occasions a confession was excited that He was the Son of God. But in these and all other similar cases, it was a display of his divine nature which called forth the confession. But, if Christ was not the Son of God as to his divine nature, though the language of the confession was correct, the faith which produced it was erroneous. But these confessions met with our Saviour's approbation; they must therefore have proceeded from a right faith: consequently Christ as to his divine nature is the Son of God.

21. Various passages speak of God's sending his Son, as the greatest display of his love to mankind: St. John says the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Our Saviour says, God sent his Son, that the world through Him might be saved. For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. And when we are told in the language of inspiration, that God sent his Son into the World, it is a plain indication that Christ was the Son of God before He was sent. It is further to be observed, that the Father's sending of the Son is represented as the greatest display of divine love; but how could this appear, if God was not a Father, nor Christ his Son, till after he was sent? There is nothing said, or can be said of the Divine Being, that can so affect the human heart with a sense of his goodness, as the consideration that He spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. But if Christ was not the Son of God as to his divine nature, then He was not the Son in any sense at the time He was given, and consequently the consideration of his being the Son of God is to be left out of the question, whenever we take a correct view of the manifestation of the divine goodness in the work of redemption: and then we may write Ichabod upon these passages, for the glory will then be departed.

That the love of God might have been displayed in sending Christ, if

He had not been his Son, is what we do not deny, but whatever that might have been, it could not have been what constitutes the beauty and force of these passages; and what gives them all their heart melting tenderness; and what is more, that love could not have been what the Scriptures represent it to have been. And for what purpose can the Scriptures use the term Son as a proof of the great love wherewith God has loved us, if the term Son is to be taken in a sense that affords no display of divine love? In this case these passages are not only rendered meagre but erroneous: they are made in calling our attention to divine love, to pass over more interesting subjects, and to lay the chief stress, on a circumstance which is not able to bear the weight. But when we consider that Christ was a Son, whom the Father had begotten in his own nature, and who was as perfect as Himself, and whom on that account He loved as his own person, then we see that the giving of such a Son was a proof of that love which passeth knowledge.*

22. Another passage which claims our attention, is Matt. xvi. 13—18. When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, He asked his disciples saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, some say Thou art John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He said unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The question here is, had Peter no higher views of the Sonship of Christ, than believing that it resulted from the production of his human nature? The disciples had better opportunities of knowing Christ than the men of the world had, by their converse with Him, and their revelations from heaven: to them it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, when to others it was not given: and therefore unless they had formed more exalted ideas of the Saviour's Sonship than others did, we have no reason to believe that their confession of it would have met with such an extraordinary commendation, as we find it did in this place. But the confession that He was the Son of God in his human nature did not imply a more exalted idea of Him, than those had

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* "To lose sight of the true and proper Sonship, is to lose one of the most affecting views of the love of God towards man. Had Abraham been called to sacrifice one of his servants, the trial would have been comparatively small. But take thy son, thine only son Isaac, was very different language; and the service was valued accordingly. We are thus furnished in some degree with the means of judging as to the import of that astonishing language, 'God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son.' This view of divine love is not simply the most affecting in itself: it is so also from being the idea of the Spirit, who, in the above, and many similar passages, expressly refers to the previously existing relation of Sonship, as the great testimony of God's peculiar love to the family of Adam. To suppose the contrary, is not only to divest them of their beauty and meaning, but also to represent the Spirit of all truth as leading, by his language, the most careful and candid into error."

who said He was Elias, that is, Elijah. Elijah had a miraculous translation out of the world, and if he had dwelt among the Apostles, he must have had a miraculous translation into the world, which would have entitled him as much to be called the Son of God, as a miraculous conception could do. Hence, if Peter did not believe in the Eternal Sonship, he confessed Christ to be the Son of God on no higher grounds than was implied in the faith of those who believed Him to be Elijah: but in this case how did he become entitled to a peculiar blessing, and our Saviour's high commendation? It would have appeared more reasonable that a peculiar blessing should have been pronounced on those whose faith was equally exalted, whilst their opportunities were so much inferior. Instead of our Saviour saying, blessed art thou Simon Barjona, we might have expected that He would have replied as He did to Thomas; Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; but blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed.

The faith of which St. Peter here makes a confession was produced by a revelation from heaven, as appears by our Saviour's reply: Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. But St. Peter might have known that Christ was the Son of God as to his human nature without a revelation, and we cannot discover what purpose such a revelation was to serve: but that Christ was the Son of God in his divine nature could not have been known unless it had been revealed from heaven, and the doctrine was of such importance as to be worthy of being made the subject of a revelation. And if we understand the Sonship here spoken of to include the divine nature, the whole passage is animated and intelligible: but on any other supposition, our Saviour's reply is altogether inexplicable.

To Peter's confession our Saviour replies, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The apostle's name signified a rock, and he was now worthy of that appellation, because he was so firmly established in the Christian faith. And it is incredible that his faith should have been so highly extolled, if it had consisted merely in believing that Christ was the Son of God as to his human nature only. Could that be the faith on which the Church is erected, of which Christians have been ignorant for 1700 years together? There is no proof whatever that St. Peter in his confession made any allusion to the miraculous conception, nor any evidence that he was then acquainted with such a circumstance. If the apostle here only spoke of the Sonship of our Saviour's human nature, it was no more than those may admit who deny his divinity. And is this the faith which gives its possessor the firmness of a rock, and that can give such stability to the Church that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it? But a belief that Christ was the Son of God, as to his divine nature, necessarily includes whatever is essential to his divinity, and this is of such importance in the Christian cause as to justify our Saviour's high commendation of it. We may, therefore, rest assured that St. Peter's confession implied that Christ was the Son of God as to his divine nature.

23. In the third chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle declares that Christ is worthy of more glory than Moses: and if he

could have persuaded the Jews of this, he would have removed their prejudice against the Gospel; it might be expected, therefore, that he would bring forward the strongest arguments to establish his position. For this purpose, he maintains that Christ is the builder of the Church, which He styles a house, on which account He had more glory than Moses, because a builder must be superior to the materials of a building; "He that buildeth the house has more honour than the house." But Christ could not be the builder of a house, of which Moses was only one of the materials, unless He possessed proper divinity. Accordingly, he says, "He that built all things is God." He had before proved that Christ laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens were the work of his hands; and, in this place, he shows Christ to be the builder of the Church, and then significantly adds, "He that built all things is God." And the next argument he uses to prove Christ's superiority is, that Moses was faithful as a *servant*, but *Christ as a son*. And it would be very strange indeed, if the apostle, after referring to our Saviour's divine nature as a proof of the superiority, should, in the next place, and for the same purpose, mention a title which only belonged to his human nature. If the apostle, under the term Son, included the divine nature, it was very properly introduced, to show the Jews that though He had an office to fill, it did not detract from his real dignity, because in the discharge of that office he was not as a servant, but as a son over his own house. But if the apostle, under the term Son, only included his human nature, it no ways answered his purpose. The apostle makes a contrast between Moses as a servant, and Christ as a son, in order to prove the superiority of the latter over the former; but where is the force of his argument, if he only meant that Christ was a son as to his human nature, in which nature he declares Him to be made like to his brethren.

As the apostle was labouring to persuade the Hebrews of Christ's superiority, he would certainly intend to be understood; but if he knew at that time of the miraculous conception, he never mentions it, and how were the Jews to know that he called Christ the Son of God in reference to that event? If they had both known and believed this circumstance, they might have disputed the ground which he had taken. They might have said Moses was the Son of God by creation, and therefore the Sonship of Christ, as to his human nature, could not give Him a superiority over Moses. If the apostle had explained that Christ had a miraculous birth, they might still have disputed that this circumstance alone did not prove his superiority; because Adam was the Son of God by a miraculous production, and yet that circumstance alone did not render him superior to other men. Plants grow from seed; but if divine power should now produce a new plant, it would not on that account be superior to others: for others, though in a different way, are as really the production of a divine power. Therefore, if the apostle, by the term Son in this place, meant our Saviour's human nature only, it seems impossible for the Jews to have understood him; and if they had understood him, they might have disputed his argument: it was no way likely to carry conviction to their minds. But if the apostle, under the term Son, included the divine nature, then the argument is obvious,

strong, and conclusive; we may be, therefore, assured that this was the sense in which he intended to be understood.

24. In the beginning of the epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle shows that Christ has a Sonship which discovers his superiority, not only to all the prophets, but likewise to all the angels in heaven. He describes our Saviour as the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power; being made, he says, so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. "For unto which of the angels, said he, at any time Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten Thee?" And when He brought his first begotten into the world, He saith, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." That which is to our purpose in these words, is the argument of the apostle, that Christ, when called the Son of God, has a more excellent name than the angels. But how does this come to be a more excellent name? It cannot be meant that however it be applied, or in whatever sense it be taken, that it is a more excellent name, because both angels and men are called the sons of God. This name, therefore, must be attributed to Christ in a peculiar manner, or it could not distinguish Him from others, and it must be given to Him on higher grounds than it is to any other; otherwise, though it might distinguish Him, it could not display his superior excellence: and if it does not display his superior excellence, the apostle's argument falls to the ground. And the name can only show Christ to be superior, so far as it is expressive of a superior nature.

Dr. Owen says, "Being the Natural and Eternal Son of God, upon the discharge of his work, the Father declared and pronounced that to be his name. His being the Son of God, is the proper foundation of his being called so; and his discharge of his office the occasion of its declaration." "He is not called the Son of God upon such a common account as angels and men—the one by creation, and the other by adoption—but peculiarly and by way of eminence." "It is required that in the testimony produced, a signal *name* be appropriated to the Messiah, so as that He may inherit it exclusively. It is not being called by this or that name, in common with others, that is intended; but such a peculiar assignation of a name to Him whereby He might for ever be distinguished from others. This name must be such as proves his pre-eminence above all the angels. It is not then the general name of a Son of God that the apostle insisteth on, but the peculiar assignation of this name to the Lord Jesus on his own particular account; and this appropriation proves his unrivalled dignity, for it is evident that God intended thereby to declare his singular honour and glory, giving Him a name to denote it, that was never assigned to any mere creature as his peculiar inheritance."

Dr. Macknight, on these words, *Thou art my Son:* To-day have I begotten Thee, says—"The emphasis of this speech lieth on the word begotten, importing that the person addressed is God's son, not by creation, but by generation. It was on account of this speech, Psalm ii. 2, that the Jews universally believed the person, the Lord's Messiah, or Christ, to be really the Son of God." "It is true, some contend that the words, 'My son, thou art,' &c. are a prediction of our Lord's

miraculous conception. But, on that supposition, the argument taken from the name falls: for instead of proving Jesus superior to angels, his miraculous conception does not make Him superior to Adam, who was as much the immediate work of God, as Christ's human nature was the immediate work of the Holy Ghost."

When, like the two writers above, we consider Christ to be the Son of God as to his divine nature, we see the strength, and feel the force of the apostle's argument; but if the Sonship of Christ be confined to his human nature, the apostle's argument is totally destroyed. And if the apostle could have reasoned so fallaciously, as to attempt to prove that the miraculous conception made Christ greater than the angels, when in fact that circumstance did not make Him equal to them, what becomes of his inspiration? And what dependance can be placed on any description he gives of our Saviour? If we allow the apostle to have understood the subject, we must admit that Christ was the Son of God as to his divine nature.

25. In Hebrews v. 8, the apostle, speaking of Christ, says—*Though He were a son, yet learned He obedience, by the things which He suffered.* This denotes that He had a Sonship which exempted Him from all obligation to the obedience here mentioned; and that the obedience He paid was a wonderful display of humility and condescension, considering that He was a son; likewise that the relation in which He stood to God the Father, showed his obedience to be what could not have been expected of Him, or demanded from Him: also that the Sonship attributed to Christ in Scripture appeared inconsistent to some, with what He was said to do and to suffer, so that they might be led to doubt or deny either the one or the other: and both have in fact been denied. "Some of the most pernicious errors that ever disturbed the Christian Church, took their rise from the sublime display of the greatness of the Son of God, which is made in the Jewish Scriptures. For certain false teachers in the Christian Church, probably converts from Judaism, holding the doctrine of their unbelieving brethren, fancied that the greatness of the Son of God was inconsistent with the nature of man. They therefore affirmed that Jesus Christ had not come in the flesh; that his body was nothing but the appearance of a body; and that He was crucified only in appearance. Of these pernicious tenets we have clear traces in the epistles of John, where they are expressly condemned; and the teachers who maintained them are called Antichrists, or opposers of Christ."

On the contrary, others admit his sufferings, but deny that he was the Son of God as to his divine nature. But in the beginning of this epistle, the apostle has declared Him to be the Son of God in such a way, as to shew his pre-eminence over all the angels in heaven, and in such a manner, as to be the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of the Father's person. And in this chapter he exhibits Him offering up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death; and to obviate the objection that might be taken, either against his divinity or his humanity, he thought proper to add, that *though He was a son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.* Dr. Whitby, instead of *learned*, would ren-

der he *taught* obedience; and shews that the original will bear this construction. Taken in this sense, it amounts to what St. Peter says, that Christ suffered, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. But whether we take it in this sense or the other, the apostle's argument remains the same. It depends on the contrast between what Christ *was* and what He *did*. What He did, was his obedience unto death; What He was, is expressed by the term *Son*. And though He was a son, yet He learned or taught obedience by what He suffered.

The point now to be determined is, in what sense the apostle speaks of Christ being a *Son*. If he meant his humanity only, or his miraculous conception, where is the contrast or opposition between what he was, and what He suffered? Where is the reason for saying *though* He was a son? Could such a Sonship have placed Him above obedience, or exempted Him from sufferings, any more than if He had come into the world in the regular course of nature? Did the miraculous formation of the first man lessen his obligation to obedience? What should we have thought of St. Luke, who says Adam was the Son of God, if he had likewise said, though he was a son, yet he was required to obey? But if Christ had no Eternal Sonship, St. Paul must be supposed to speak in this manner, and to say that though Christ was a son as to his human nature, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. But was there in this any thing marvellous or contrary to the common notions of mankind, so as to require the apostle to say, Though He was a son, &c. The apostle in these words makes an admission of what might be urged as an objection to the sufferings of Christ; but surely no one could ever urge the miraculous conception as being inconsistent with his sufferings: those who denied his sufferings, denied the existence of his human nature; and to refute those persons, St. John proved that the Son of God came in the flesh. His coming in the flesh was what made Him capable of suffering; and to do this, was the end and design of his incarnation. St. Paul could therefore never suspect that any would ever plead his coming in the flesh as any hindrance to his sufferings; and hence it is impossible that He should confine his Sonship to his human nature, when He said, though he was a son, yet learned He obedience, &c. His incarnation, or his coming in the flesh, could never be thought a reason against his sufferings; for it was the very circumstance that made his sufferings possible, and what the Apostles produced as a proof that He did suffer.

It follows from what has been advanced, that the apostle uses the term Son for our Saviour's divine nature. Dr. Owen's note on the place is as follows:—"*He was a son;* and yet, being a son, that is, such a son as we have described, or, *that* Son of God. It was no singular thing for a Son of God, by adoption, to be chastised, to suffer, and thereby to be instructed to obedience. He therefore speaks not of Him as a son on *any* account, or such as any mere creature can claim an interest in; but He was God's own son, the only begotten of the Father, who was also in the form of God. That He should do the things here spoken of is great and marvellous; therefore it is said, he did thus, although He was a son. Here is implied his *love*, that he would submit to this condition for our sakes. On his own account, no such thing was

required, or any way needful to him; but for our sakes (such was his love, he would do it, although he was a son."

When the Apostle is writing to the Philippians, he says, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And the very same sentiment is expressed in the words under consideration, Though He was a son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. These two passages mutually explain and support each other. Though Christ was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God; nevertheless He took upon Him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death. For such a son to learn obedience by what he suffered, was a most marvellous display of kindness and condescension; we are therefore under the necessity to understand the apostle, in these words, to be speaking of our Saviour's divine nature; consequently of his Eternal Sonship, which is a doctrine so clearly proved, and so strongly established by the Scriptures, that it has stood and will stand throughout all generations.

26. Further evidence from Scripture might be collected in great abundance; but this is not requisite, because that which has been already produced, is more than sufficient to prove, that Christ, as to his divine nature, is the Son of God. The sense which has been put upon the various passages brought forward, is what they naturally and obviously suggest, and in which they have been understood in all ages, and in which every man would understand them, if he did not bring a mind to the perusal prepossessed by an opposite opinion. If these passages be so expounded as to correspond with the notion that Christ is the Son of God as to his human nature only, the spirit of them evaporates, the propriety and utility of them are annihilated, and the arguments of the inspired penmen are totally destroyed.

Another circumstance which renders it unnecessary to collect any more evidence from Scripture to prove that Christ is the Son of God as to his divine nature, is, that the Scriptures furnish no evidence whatever on the other side of the question. We allow, and firmly believe, that Christ was the Son of God as to his human nature; and the Scriptures may give him that title in reference to his incarnation, and to his resurrection from the dead; but that is perfectly consistent with his being the Son of God before He came into the world: consequently, it furnishes no evidence against the Eternal Sonship. No evidence of this description can be produced from the Word of God.

Since the notion that Christ is not the Son of God as to his divine nature, is not supported by the Word of God; that alone is a sufficient reason for its rejection; but it is not the only reason, for it is utterly useless in the Christian cause; it can be turned to no advantage in any branch of theology; it can have no good influence on any part of religious experience or practice. It does not represent the Deity in a more amiable light to the world; it has no tendency in any degree to make Him any more the object of our love, our reverence, or our confi-

dence. It invests Him with no additional terrors to the wicked, nor with any more grace and favour to the righteous. It does not make the Christian system more easy to be understood; it removes no objections from infidels, nor does it tend to reconcile any parties in the church. In some of these respects, it has a direct opposite tendency; it may therefore do evil, but it can do no good.

We are aware that the advocates of this notion maintain that it has its advantages in some of the respects we have mentioned, because they say it is more agreeable to reason. But the assertion that it is more agreeable to reason is what we deny, and have already refuted. It may indeed appear more agreeable to reason when we only view one side of the subject, but it will be found to be the reverse, when every side of the doctrine is placed under our inspection. For, among Trinitarians, the opinion that Christ is not the Son of God as to his divine nature, involves the notion of three distinct Supreme Beings, amongst whom no one is the fountain of communication to the others; which is a notion that divides the divine essence, and is incompatible with the unity of the Godhead: and which consequently overthrows the Christian system. It is, therefore, both worthless and pernicious, and should be utterly discarded from the religious world.

To some persons this notion may possess all the fascinating charms of novelty; but a desire for novelty in religious opinions should not be indulged; for such an appetite is both corrupt and insatiable; the more it receives the more it craves; it grows stronger in proportion to its indulgence. It can only be subdued by cutting off its supplies: it is an unclean spirit that goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. To prevent being lost in endless mazes, we should beware of striking out into any new theological path, which no prophet nor apostle ever explored: "Thus saith the Lord, stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls."

27. One of our opponents on this subject manifests great displeasure against those who believe in the Eternal Sonship, because they require candidates for the ministry in their community, to be of the same mind with themselves. He reprobates such conduct, as he states, "*Because* "*the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship is allowed by its advocates to be* "*a mystery*, (*and of course they do not understand it themselves*,) "*neither is it essential to salvation.*" On these accounts he thinks those who disbelieve the Eternal Sonship should be freely admitted without any scruple, to labour in the word and doctrine with those who do believe it. To prove that there should be no hinderance to the admission of such candidates, the first argument he brings forward is, that the doctrine in question is mysterious. The position which he takes, viz., that the doctrine is mysterious, will be granted, but whether the inference he draws from it be legitimate and conclusive requires examination. If it be allowed that he has come to a proper conclusion on this subject, it will follow of course, that we may lawfully preach against any doctrine which is confessedly mysterious. We have hope towards God that there will be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust; but after all the revelation which has been made of this doctrine, its advocates allow it is a

mystery; and according to the argument of our opponent, they do not understand it themselves; they ought therefore to admit those to preach among them, who have imbibed so much of Baron Swedenborgs' tenets, as to declare there will be no resurrection of the dead. St. Paul says great is the mystery of godliness, of course he did not understand it himself, yet we do not find that he was willing that any thing should be preached against living soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world. The doctrine of the divine existence is allowed by its advocates to be a mystery; of course they do not understand it themselves, and therefore ought to receive with open arms all who come to declare that there is no God. All this must be admitted, or the argument here brought forward must be abandoned. We are told that the advocates of the mystery under consideration do not understand it themselves; but this requires some explanation. They may clearly understand it as a fact, when the manner of it is incomprehensible: for instance, with respect to the resurrection of the body, it may be clearly understood as a fact, but we cannot know the manner in which it will be accomplished. So it is with respect to the Eternal Sonship; it may be clearly understood as a fact, but the manner of it is above our conception: but this is no reason why we should suffer it to be assailed with impunity, unless the same liberty is to be taken with all other Gospel mysteries.

The other argument, for the admission of candidates to the ministry, who disbelieve the Eternal Sonship, is, that the doctrine is not essential. We should have known better what to reply to this, if a line had been drawn between such tenets as are essential, and those which are not so. But without giving any opinion on the subject, we may for convenience admit that it is not essential. Yet are there not many doctrines of this description, the belief of which would disqualify a person from preaching amongst a people by whom such doctrines are rejected? The peculiarities of Calvinism, Quakerism, and Winchesterianism, we suppose are not essential; for we are unwilling to believe that the adoption of any of these creeds would render a man's salvation impossible. But would it be proper to permit men of these persuasions to labour among a people who firmly believe that such peculiarities have no foundation in the Word of God? In this case, the pulpit might be occupied one day by a preacher who might maintain that Christ only died for a select and limited number of mankind, and all the rest were left to perish, and could not by any means escape the damnation of hell. The next day, another person might come and proclaim, that Christ died for all; that it was possible for every individual to be saved; for there is no respect of persons with God. The reader will be able to pursue the illustration with respect to other conflicting opinions. And we ask, if such jarring sentiments would be likely to promote the comfort and edification of the people? Would they cause peace to attend the gates of Zion, and prosperity its borders? Would they not be much more likely to kindle the flame of discord and strife, and instead of inducing the people to love one another, would they not be more likely to make them ready to bite and devour one another? To prevent such disturbance men of opposite sentiments ought to be in separate communities.

What has now been stated applies to the doctrine of the Eternal Son

ship: one may come and preach that this is the doctrine clearly and uniformly taught in the Scriptures; that the doctrine of the Trinity can be established on no other basis; that if this doctrine be not admitted, the words of the Apostles are without meaning, and their arguments are fallacious. But the next opportunity another might come into the same pulpit and declare that the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship is both absurd and dangerous; that it destroys the Deity of Christ, and ruins the scheme of Redemption. And would not such a conflict of opinions disturb the minds of the people, prevent the progress of the Gospel, and be a disgrace to the community? There may be some individuals who have more prudence than to make their peculiarities a bone of contention, and whose general excellence more than counterbalances their particular defects; but this could not be expected to be the case with all who adopt such peculiarities. And, therefore, a religious community, who believe in the Eternal Sonship, do not do their duty, unless they reject such candidates for the ministry as maintain the opposite doctrine.

FINIS.

J. BLACKWELL, PRINTER, SHEFFIELD.

THREE SERMONS

ON THE

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY

ABRAHAM SCOTT.

" Suffer me that I may speak, and after that I have spoken, mock on."—JOB.

SECOND EDITION;
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1832.

SERMON I.

"WE KNOW THAT THOU ART A TEACHER COME FROM GOD."

JOHN iii. 2.

WHEN Christ was in Jerusalem, at the passover, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. And there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; who came to Jesus by night, and said, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him. This declaration of Nicodemus involves a subject which is of the highest importance to mankind, and in which every individual is concerned. If Christ was not a teacher sent from God, Christianity is no better than a cunningly devised fable — our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain. No messenger has ever been sent by the Almighty to the human race; we have had no news from the invisible world: we have nothing to support us under sickness and sorrow, pain and death: we have no prospect beyond the gloomy grave. We are without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world. But, if Christ be a teacher come from God, then the doctrines he taught, are true and righteous altogether.

And it follows, that he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. And to them death has lost its sting, and the grave its victory: for when their dust shall return to the dust, the spirit shall return to God who gave it. The body shall be raised at the last day, and the whole man shall inherit mansions of glory; in God's presence where there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand where there are pleasures for evermore.

The discovery that Christ is a teacher come from God, is the greatest source of gratitude and exultation. Hence Zacharias said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant: whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the Apostle says, Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. To know that Christ is a teacher come from God, is the most useful knowledge we can possess. If a man should know all human

arts and sciences, all the learned languages, the history and politics of all nations, the magnitudes and distances of the planets, with every branch of natural and experimental philosophy, unless he knew the truth as it is in Christ, all his acquisitions would terminate in vanity and vexation of spirit. Hence the Apostle esteemed all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ: and all the knowledge he had of Him was founded upon knowing that He was a teacher come from God. It is our duty and our interest to acquire this knowledge. It is not enough that we have been trained up in the profession of Christianity, and have never entertained any doubt of its truth; unless we have examined its evidences, we shall be liable, in the hour of temptation, to fall into the snare of the devil, and to make shipwreck of faith. And, as our holy religion is perpetually assailed, by all the artifice of its numerous enemies, it is highly requisite, that our minds should be fortified by those principles, on which the proof of its truth is established.

But, the evidence we should expect to find, is only what the nature of the subject will admit of—such as will satisfy a candid and sincere inquirer after truth. If the evidence were so clear and powerful as to force conviction, without a possibility of being evaded, it would unfit us for the duties of the present life; it would destroy our moral liberty, and be inconsistent with a state of probation; and it would leave faith without a reward, and divest it of all saving effect. But if our examination be conducted with diligence, humility, and a sincere love of the truth, we shall obtain, through the divine blessing, such a kind, and degree of evidence, as will give us a sure trust and confidence in God; repel the attacks of infidelity, and defend us against the fiery darts of the enemy. Such evidence as will prepare us to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. And in the most trying situations, we shall have a never failing source of support and consolation, in knowing, that Christ is a teacher come from God.

1. In proof of this, we allege that mankind were in great need of a divine teacher; for the light of nature was insufficient either to inform the mind or to subdue the corruptions of the heart. Wherever men had no divine revelation, the world was lying in wickedness: darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. If the light of nature had been adequate to teach man to answer the end of his creation, and to secure his present and eternal welfare, it would have furnished a presumption, that no teacher would have been sent from heaven. But after society had existed, and arts and sciences had been cultivated for the space of four thousand years, it was found, that the world by wisdom knew not God.

The heathen nations worshipped a multiplicity of deities, at variance among themselves, and who often visited the earth for the perpetration of atrocious crimes; and granted their special favours to the most notorious workers of iniquity. In their temples they practised all manner of abominations. It is a shame to speak of those things which were done by them in secret. And what other sort of wor-

ship, could they expect to be agreeable, to such sordid deities as Jupiter, Bacchus, and Venus?

And these enormities were not confined to barbarous hordes and savage tribes, but were practised by the learned and refined Egyptians, Grecians, and Romans. Even these bowed down to stocks and stones, beasts and reptiles; and offered sacrifices to devils, and mingled their worship with licentiousness and debauchery. They offered up both young children and grown persons, and frequently their own offspring, in sacrifice to their monstrous idols. They carried their own infants to a sequestered place, and left them either to perish with hunger or to be torn in pieces by some wild beast. They practised and justified self-murder. In the Roman amphitheatre great numbers of men were doomed to fight with wild beasts, to make sport for the people. Augustus appointed a great many to be slain in devotion to the manes of Julius Cæsar: and it became a custom at Rome to devote men to death for the safety of the Emperor. Plutarch, says, he could see nothing unjust in the laws of Lycurgus; yet, those celebrated laws, so much admired in ancient Greece, allowed of theft, a community of wives, and the murder of such infants as were weak or sickly. The exercise of goodness, righteousness and truth, were so far from being indispensibly required by the heathen religion, that those who were guilty of the blackest crimes, and who carried their revenge, rapine, and bloodshed, to the highest degree, were not only honoured on earth, but were ranked among the gods in a future state.

Philosophy, in its most improved state, was unable to remove these corruptions; it could furnish no substitute that could be placed on any solid foundation. Many of the celebrated sages of antiquity, saw the debasing, and demoralising tendency of heathen mythology, but were unable to discover any practicable remedy. Their wisest and best instructions had a mixture of impurity, and did not seem to be believed by themselves, and were not recommended by their own example. Their maxims were sent forth as the mere opinions of men, which might be either received or rejected with impunity; they wanted the sanction of divine authority, which at once delivers precepts for the regulation of our lives, and demands obedience by the most powerful and awakening considerations. Some of these philosophers were so convinced of the need of a divine revelation that they pretended to have obtained it.

It may be supposed, that the heathens might have formed a better religious code than any they ever possessed; and, without disputing this, we may ask, what they could have done if they had made the best use of their understandings? When they took a view of the beauties of the heavens and the earth, the utility and admirable structure of the universe, we grant, what some have denied, that they might have formed the idea of a Creator, possessed of all possible perfections. But, when they came more closely to investigate the subject, how could they reconcile infinite goodness with the unavoidable and dreadful calamities which abound in the world? or, justice with prosperous wickedness, and virtue in distress? And they could

discover no proof of divine mercy. If they presumed that God would pardon sin, they could not determine what kind or what number of crimes he would forgive; nor on what terms he would shew mercy; nor how this was to be made consistent with justice, holiness, and the ends of his moral government. They could not discover that he was a God that heareth prayer; nor what kind of worship would meet with his acceptance. Nor could they have imagined that God would raise the dead.

When they considered, that the soul was an immaterial substance, having desires which could not meet with their proper gratification, and powers which could not be fully developed in the present life, they might conclude that it was immortal in its own nature; but whether it was the will of its Creator to continue it in existence in another world, they could not determine. Hence, they could not be assured of a general judgment at the last day, nor of future rewards and punishments. Consequently they could have no adequate check to vice, nor any sufficient stimulus to the practice of virtue.

They could not discover that religion required them to be humble, and meek; to forgive injuries, love their enemies, and return good for evil; and to be as ready to shew kindness to men of other nations as they were to those of their own: and where these virtues are not found, there is nothing that deserves the name of religion.

They were not able to discover that religion could afford any suitable consolation in the day of adversity. When the wisest of their philosophers attempted to soothe the sorrows of the afflicted, they said, calamity was ordained by fate: that the sufferings of an individual contributed to the general good; that if pain was severe it was of short duration; that if it continued long, it was supportable. But all this could not silence, much less could it console the distressed. A man tortured with pain, and overwhelmed with anguish, might have replied to these maxims, "miserable comforters are ye all." They could not assure him, that when he was tried he would come forth as gold: and that his light afflictions which were but for a moment, were working out for him, a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.

The wisest men in the heathen world, could never imagine that God would give his Son, to be a propitiation for the sin of the world: that they were to be saved by faith, that it might be by grace: that God would give his Holy Spirit to purify our hearts, and make us partakers of the divine nature; that the righteous were to be supremely and eternally happy in the fruition of God, and to shine as the sun in the kingdom of their father for ever and ever: consequently they were in great need of a divine revelation. And, as the Almighty has made such bountiful provision for the present life, there was reason to hope that he would provide for the life to come. Medicine is produced, which would not have been needful if man had not been incident to pain and sickness. Can it therefore be expected, that our Creator would provide no remedy for the much more direful and destructive maladies of the heart? — that he would suffer man to be surrounded by a world of temptations, and make no

way for his escape? — that he would bring him into such a place of sin and misery, and afford him no hope of deliverance? — that he would make him capable of future rewards and punishments, and plant in his heart desires for immortality, and give him no certain means of obtaining future felicity, but leave him in his journey to an eternal world to grope his way in the dark? It was, therefore, not only in the highest degree needful and desirable, but there was good reason to expect that God would reveal his will to mankind. And the Christian Revelation answers all those desires and expectations; it coincides with, and corroborates all the discoveries made by the light of nature; and it abundantly supplies its defects — it furnishes whatever is requisite to make man wise to salvation. Hence, the Author of of this revelation is known to be a Teacher come from God, for no man could have taught what He has done, except God was with him.

2. The truth of the Christian Revelation is confirmed by prophecy; the prediction of future events, which, in due time, received their accomplishment. By this means the Almighty shews to his servants, the things which shall be hereafter; for, prophecy came not by the will of man, but holy men of old wrote and spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. None can look into futurity, and, at a great distance of time and place, foretel what depends on a great variety of contingent circumstances, except that Being who is possessed of omniscience, and those who are under his inspiration. And the Almighty would not fix this seal of his authority to any thing but the truth. Hence, Christ and his Apostles frequently appealed to prophecy as the evidence of his divine mission. He said, Search the Scriptures for these are they which testify of me. To comfort and convince his desponding disciples, he said, Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And, beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself; and said, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all these things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. St. Peter, says, of Christ gave all the prophets witness; when he mentions the transfiguration, which the Apostles witnessed in the Holy Mount, he adds, We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place. — This is a light which carries full conviction to the mind, and which the enemies of revelation can never extinguish; and therefore it demands our attention and regard.

It was foretold, that Christ should appear in the world, before Judah had lost its supremacy over the other tribes, and while the second temple was standing, which he should make illustrious by his presence. Gen. xlix. 10. Hag. ii. 7–9. That he should be born of a virgin; of the tribe of Judah; of the seed of David; and at the town of Bethlehem. Isaiah vii. 14. Mic. v. 2. That in an extraordinary manner he should fill the various offices of prophet, priest, and king. Deut. xviii. 15. Psalm cx. 4. Dan. vii. 14. That

the human and divine natures should be so united in his person, that the Son born should be called the Everlasting Father. Isaiah ix. 6. That he should open the eyes of the blind; unstop the ears of the deaf; make the lame man leap as an hart; and the tongue of the dumb to sing. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

It was likewise predicted that he should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; and, on account of his humble condition, be despised and rejected of men. Isaiah liii. 3. That He should be sold for thirty pieces of silver: that he should be put to a violent death; and that when the Shepherd should be smitten, the sheep should be scattered. Zech. xi. 12. Dan. ix. 26. Zech. xiii. 7. It was also foretold that when oppressed and afflicted he would not open his mouth, but be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and be dumb as a sheep before her shearers. Isa. liii. 7. That he should be scourged, buffeted, and spit upon: that his hands and his feet should be pierced; that in his sufferings he should have gall and vinegar given him to drink; and be treated with scorn and contempt. Isa. l. 6. Psalm xxii. 16—lxix. 21—xxii. 7, 8. That in his anguish and distress he should cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Psalm xxii. 1. That after being numbered with transgressors, and dying as one of the vilest malefactors, he should have an honourable interment, by making his grave with the rich. Isa. liii. 9. It was also predicted, that he should be raised from the dead, before his body had seen corruption; and that he should ascend to heaven, and sit down at the right hand of God. Psalm xvi. 10—xxiv. 9.

These, and so many other predictions were delivered of Christ, all of them hundreds, and some of them thousands of years before he came into the world, that if they were collected and properly arranged, they would form a history of his life, of his sufferings and death, of his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to glory. And these, to all men of candour and reflection, form an incontestible proof of his divine mission, for they have all been exactly accomplished. When St. Paul went into the synagogue, among those who were acquainted with the law and the prophets, as his manner was, he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures; opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and by this means he confounded the Jews, proving, that this is the very Christ. They might persist in their unbelief, but they could not avoid being confounded by the overwhelming evidence which the fulfilment of so many clear predictions exhibited. And if any retain such an invincible prejudice as not to believe what the prophets have said, neither would they be persuaded if one should arise from the dead.

All that infidels have been able to say against the evidence arising from the fulfilment of prophecies, is, that they were written after the events: but, of this they have never been able to give the shadow of a proof. And we should suppose that none of them would venture to say that the predictions of Christ were written after the events took place; because it is an incontestible fact, that all these

prophecies existed long before the Saviour's advent; and they have always remained in the hands of the Jews, who are enemies to Christ; a circumstance which gives additional force to the evidence arising from them.

While on the subject of prophecy, it may be proper to mention some of the predictions which our Saviour himself delivered. He foretold his own death, resurrection, and ascension, in the same manner in which these events took place. But what in particular requires our attention, is his prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. He pointed out to his disciples, the signs which were to precede that awful event; as wars, and rumours of wars; the appearance of false Christs; pestilence, famine, and earthquakes: the extensive spread of the Gospel, and the persecution of his own followers. Matt. xxiv. 6–14; which all came to pass: as is proved by the history of those times. He declared that fearful sights, and great signs should be seen from heaven. Luke xxi. 11: and the historian, Josephus, speaks of many prodigies which appeared at that time. When our Lord beheld Jerusalem he wept over it; and said the days would come when its enemies should cast a trench about it, and compass it around, to keep the people in on every side. Luke xix. 41–43. And history informs us, that when Titus besieged the city, he built a wall round about it, to prevent the escape of its inhabitants. Our Lord likewise declared that Jerusalem should be laid even with the ground; and of the temple he said there should not be one stone upon another, which should not be thrown down. Luke xix. 43–44 — Matt. xxiv. 2. And when the Romans took the city, they laid it waste, and tore up the very foundations of the Temple, and ploughed the ground where it had stood.

And, what is very remarkable, He predicted that the conquest of Judea, should be the most calamitous event which had ever happened to any nation since the creation of the world. Matt. xxiv. 21. Of this, there was not the least probability to all human appearance: yet this prediction received an exact and awful accomplishment. When the Romans came up against Jerusalem, all descriptions of people became victims to their rage and revenge. And the Jews suffered more by their own factions than by the Roman arms. The work of slaughter was carried on among the different factions every day; and they set fire to their own provisions, which reduced them to the miseries of the most dreadful famine; and caused thousands and tens of thousands to perish by hunger. And, when they fled out of the city, the Romans dissected them alive, in hopes of finding gold, which some of them had swallowed. And such great numbers of them were crucified before the walls of Jerusalem, that there could scarcely be room found to place the crosses on; and when the city was taken, it was almost on fire in every part; and, as the historian states, such streams of blood flowed down the streets, as were almost sufficient to quench the flames. The city was crowded with people who had come up from all parts of the kingdom to the passover; and by famine, fire, and sword, there perished at this siege about eleven hundred thousand; besides the slaughter

which took place in other parts of the kingdom. So that whoever reads the Jewish historian's account of these transactions, may be convinced that such distress never came upon any other nation: — which not only shews the fulfilment of that very remarkable prediction, but also the judgments of Heaven against the Jews for their rejection of Christ, and the accomplishment of that awful imprecation uttered by the people when they said, — His blood be on us and on our children.

And does not the fulfilment of these predictions alone, sufficiently prove the divinity of our Saviour's mission? But, as these predictions were not written more than twenty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, it may afford some the opportunity to say they were written afterwards; but this must be said without any proof, and in contradiction to all the records of antiquity on the subject. And, supposing the Evangelists to have been destitute of all moral principle, what could have induced them to forge these predictions? — The proof of the Saviour's divine mission was complete without them; and there were many living witnesses who could have detected the fraud, so that the forgery would not only have been useless, but the most likely way to ruin the cause they were endeavouring to support. But, of the credibility of these writers we shall have to speak hereafter; let us now look at the evidence arising from all the Old Testament predictions, and at our Saviour's own prophecies, and the conclusion we must draw is, — we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God.

3. The truth of the Christian revelation is proved by miracles. We read, in the records of those times, that Christ fed many thousands of the hungry multitude with a few loaves and fishes; that he walked on the sea, and calmed the tempest; that he restored sight to a man born blind; that he expelled evil spirits, and raised Lazarus to life, after he had been four days in the grave. Great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and he healed them; insomuch, that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel. A great number of such miracles are circumstantially related by the four Evangelists: and St. John says, many other signs truly did Jesus, in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name.

These miracles were performed to produce a conviction of the truth of his doctrine, and of his having a commission from heaven to publish it. When he raised Lazarus to life, He lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; and I know that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it; that they may believe that thou hast sent me. He said, the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else,

believe me for the very works' sake. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth, but I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. — When John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to inquire of him, whether he was the long expected Messiah; He appealed to his miracles as a full confirmation of his divine mission, and said, go and shew John the things which you now see and hear. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up; and the poor have the gospel preached unto them.

These works were visible deviations from the course of nature, and were evidently above the power of man: they shewed a divine concurrence with the person who wrought them; and it is incredible, that God should give this power to any person to deceive his people, and establish falsehood. It was by these miracles that Christ excited so much attention: a great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And it can scarcely be expected that he would have had any followers without them. All who embraced his doctrines could say, like Nicodemus, We know that thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do the miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.

It is likewise to be remembered, that Christ did not only work miracles himself, but he conferred miraculous powers on his disciples, enabling them to heal diseases, open the eyes of the blind, cast out devils, raise the dead, and speak languages which they had never learned: and they could likewise communicate the same power to others; which, we conclude, afforded sufficient attestation of the truth of the Christian revelation.

The unbelieving Jews did not deny the miracles which Christ wrought amongst them, but they attributed them to the devil. There was brought unto him one possessed by an evil spirit, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw; and all the people were amazed and said, is not this the Son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, this fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils. The Emperor Julian, who was one of the most subtile and powerful adversaries of the Christian cause, admitted that Christ and his apostles had wrought miracles, but he denied that these miracles proved the truth of their doctrine. But such evasions will not be made at the present day. The only subterfuge to which infidelity will now resort is, to deny the truth and reality of those miracles.*

That Christ and his apostles, professed to work miracles in proof

* Mr. Hume, though he believed in the existence of God, and in future rewards and punishments, yet maintained, that no testimony could render a miracle credible. This was as much as to say, that the Almighty himself was not able to give credibility to miracles: which is what we cannot believe until some person works a miracle to prove it. His arguments have been completely refuted by Campbell, Paley, and Bishop Gleig.

of his divine mission, has never been disputed: and that such miracles were wrought, we have all the evidence which can be reasonably expected, considering the nature of the subject. Numerous, plain, and circumstantial accounts of these miracles have been published from the beginning, which remain without any counter testimony. Those who delivered up the Apostles to councils, and scourged them in the synagogues, and persecuted them to death, never answered their arguments, nor proved any of their statements to be incorrect: they have furnished the world with no refutation of them.

The miracles which are stated to have been wrought, were to establish the Gospel kingdom in the world: a work which could not have been accomplished without supernatural agency; and which was of so much importance to mankind, as to be worthy of the extraordinary interposition of heaven: so that there is nothing in them but what is consistent with the wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

These miracles are spoken of as being notorious to all, wherever the gospel was proclaimed. When Peter preached to a great multitude on the day of Pentecost, he said, ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. St. Paul, writing to the Hebrews, says, How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? When writing to the Romans, he speaks of the grace that was given, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God. And is it credible, that the apostles would have written and spoken in this manner in reference to the miracles being so well known, wherever the Gospel was received, if the people whom they addressed could have contradicted them? When St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, an epistle which was to be read in all the Churches, he gave them directions respecting the use they were to make of their miraculous gifts; — and if they had had no such gifts among them, would it not have ruined his credit for ever?

The design of these miracles was to promote piety to God, and benevolence to man: to induce every man to speak truth with his neighbour; and to prove that no liar could escape divine vengeance in a future state. And can it be expected, that they would attempt to carry on such a scheme, by the grossest falsehood, fraud and forgery? These miracles were unconnected with all state policy and worldly interest. Those who wrought them knew that bonds and imprisonment awaited them in every city; so that if they were deceiving mankind, it was not for any advantage to themselves, for, the only fruit they could expect from their labour, was all manner of hardships and privations in this life, and the most gloomy prospect beyond the grave.

The miracles were of such a kind as would not have been made choice of for the purpose of deception. One of these was feeding a multitude with five loaves and two fishes. And they did all eat and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten, were about five thousand men, besides women and children. This was not like the Popish miracle of transubstantiation, which no man can see, nor feel, nor taste, nor smell: when all the circumstances of it are considered, it is evident that it did not admit of any imposition. Another of his miracles was opening the eyes of a man who was born blind; with whom he had no previous acquaintance, and whose parents stood in fear of the Jews. In this case there was every opportunity that could be desired for examination, and which his enemies availed themselves of. The Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight; and they called his parents and said, Is this your son, whom ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what means he now seeth, we know not: he is of age, ask him. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Then, again they called the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, whether he be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.

The raising of Lazarus to life, after he had been in the grave four days, was one of those kind of miracles which did not admit of any deception. The enemies of Christ had every opportunity for investigating the subject, and for refuting the story if it had been false. The chief priests and Pharisees assembled in council, to devise means to prevent the miracle from being believed: but they could not determine what was to be done; for Lazarus was there ready to testify the truth of it. They once thought of putting Lazarus to death; but even that would not have answered their purpose. And when multitudes of people went to Bethany to see Lazarus, whom Christ had raised from the dead, the Pharisees said among themselves, Perceive ye, how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him.*

It is to be remembered, that the miracles wrought in proof of Christianity, were not done in a corner: they were performed by day-light, in the open streets, and in the most public and conspicuous places, before vast numbers of spectators of all ranks and conditions, and who were capable of judging whether the miracles were

* There are two miracles of transcendant importance, which our limits do not permit us to enter upon, one of these is the resurrection of Christ; and the other, his appearance to Saul on his way to Damascus. The former of these is most ably discussed in a Sermon on the subject by Saurin: the latter is admirably illustrated by Lord Lyttleton, in his observations on the conversion of St. Paul. We recommend these publications to those who wish to see a decisive and satisfactory evidence of the truth of Christianity.

true or false. They were performed in the presence of the bitterest enemies of Christianity, who had the civil power in their own hands, and who would have been very glad to have detected any fraud, and to have published it to the world.

If Christ and his apostles, had formed the design to deceive the world by false miracles, how, in their unprotected state, could they expect to succeed, against their numerous, skilful, and powerful opponents? And, as they professed to perform so many miracles, in so public a manner, and for so many years together, if these miracles were not really performed, how did it happen that the fraud was never discovered in any one instance? If missionaries were now to go to China or Japan, and profess to work miracles in proof of their mission, we cannot expect that any art which they could employ, would be attended with any ultimate success. If they deceived a few at the first, it would only tend to excite a spirit of vigilance and research in others; who, upon examination, would discover the fallacy of their pretensions, and overwhelm them with infamy and contempt. But the apostles had to encounter men of superior information, to any of those nations of the present day who have not received the Gospel; yet their miracles gained such credit, that thousands, and tens of thousands, in various kingdoms and provinces, embraced a new religion, in opposition to all their former habits, and prejudices; and at the hazard of their lives, and of every thing that was dear to them in the world. It is therefore evident, that miracles were performed; and, by these miracles it is fully proved, that Christ was a Teacher come from God.

SERMON II.

"WE KNOW THAT THOU ART A TEACHER COME FROM GOD."

JOHN iii. 2.

IN the former discourse on this subject, we considered that a divine revelation was needful and desirable; and that the truth of such a revelation is proved by prophecy, and by miracles.

1. We now proceed to notice the evidence which the Christian Revelation receives from the witnesses, who have given their testimony in its favour. Taking the account, as it is stated in the New Testament, we find many witnesses bearing testimony to the divine mission of Christ. When he was born at Bethlehem, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. The angel of the Lord said unto the shepherds, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people: for there is born this day, in the City of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising

God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men. Simeon, a just and devout man, who was waiting for the consolation of Israel, being under the influence of the Holy Spirit, declared Christ to be that salvation which God had prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel. At his baptism, the heavens were opened unto him, and the Spirit of God descended upon him. And a voice was heard from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. — Those on whom his miracles were performed, bore testimony to his divine power. Others, who saw his mighty works, spread abroad his fame, and said, what manner of man is this, that even the winds and the seas obey him? The children in the temple, cried, Hosanna to the Son of David; in the fulfillment of that prediction, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise. Two of his witnesses came from the invisible world, at his transfiguration, and others arose out of their graves after his resurrection. The devils whom he cast out, believed and trembled; and in their fear confessed him to be the Son of God. When he gave up the ghost, the vail of the Temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were rent. Now, when the Centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and those things which were done, they feared greatly, and said, Truly this was the Son of God.

The evidence arising from the testimony of these witnesses, depends on the credibility of the Apostles and Evangelists who have furnished those accounts, which we have in the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. And the genuineness and authenticity of these writings, are proved by citations from them, of authors who were contemporary with the apostles or lived near their time.* At an early period, the books composing the New Testament were collected into one volume, and distinguished by appropriate names and titles of respect. They were publicly read and expounded in the assemblies of the primitive Christians. Commentaries were written upon them, and versions of them made into different languages. Their authority was acknowledged and appealed to in all

* "An argument of great weight with those who are judges of the proofs upon which it is founded, and capable through their testimony, of being addressed to every understanding, is that which arises from the style and language of the New Testament. It is just such a language as might be expected from the Apostles, from persons of their age and in their situation, and from no other persons. It is the style neither of classic authors, nor of the ancient Christian Fathers, but Greek coming from men of Hebrew origin; that is, abounding with Hebraic and Syriac idioms, such as would naturally be found in the writings of men who used a language spoken indeed where they lived, but not the common dialect of the country. This happy peculiarity is a strong proof of the genuineness of these writings: for, who could forge them? The Christian Fathers were for the most part totally ignorant of Hebrew, and therefore were not likely to insert Hebraisms and Syriasms into their writings. The few who had a knowledge of the Hebrew, as, Justin Martyr, Origen, and Epiphanius, wrote in a language which bears no resemblance to that of the New Testament. The Nazarenes, who understood Hebrew, used chiefly, perhaps almost entirely, the Gospel of St. Matthew, and therefore cannot be suspected of forging the rest of the sacred writings. The argument, at any rate, proves the antiquity of these books; that they belonged to the age of the Apostles; that they could be composed indeed in no other."—PALEY.

controversies. They were attacked by the early adversaries of Christianity, as books containing the accounts upon which the religion was founded.*

The manner in which the Apostles give their testimony, has every mark of sincerity and truth. An artless simplicity pervades all their narrations. They do not conceal their own faults; they never court the favour of the great, nor seek any aid from learning and philosophy. They published their accounts to the world, so near the time when the various events were said to have happened, that if they had not been true, they might have been contradicted by ten thousand living witnesses. They related their facts at the places where the things were said to have been transacted; and in the face of such persons as were most strongly disposed to stop the progress of their cause, and to punish them for attempting to support it.

They mention many circumstances of such public notoriety, that they might have been easily detected, if the accounts had not been true. They tell us that Herod was troubled at the birth of Christ; and he gathered all the chief priests and scribes together, and demanded of them, where Christ was to be born: and they answered, At Bethlehem of Judea—and the Jews must have known whether a public council was assembled on that occasion. The accounts state that the multitude cried Hosanna at the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem, whereby all the city was moved; and that this happened at the Passover, when there was the greatest concourse of people; that the blind and lame came to Christ in the Temple, and he healed them; and the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things which he did, and heard the children crying Hosanna, at which they were sorely displeased. And can it be supposed, that the Evangelists would have brought in the chief priests and scribes, with the whole people of Jerusalem, and the Jews and proselytes out of all nations, assembled at the Passover, as spectators and witnesses of these things, if they had not been certain of their truth?

The circumstances connected with the death of Judas are stated to be known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem: and the ground which was purchased with the reward of his iniquity, was called the field of blood. If these things were not known at Jerusalem, could any man have wrote in this manner who expected to be believed? The Evangelists mention many things which were said and done by the Jewish council at Jerusalem, by the high priests, Annas and Caiaphas; by Herod, Felix, and King Aggrippa; by Pontius Pilate, Sergius Paulus, Gallio, Tertullus, and Dionysius the Areopagite: and the public acts of those persons and councils must have been on record, and consequently could not have been falsified without detection. And men of common sense could not have made the attempt to impose upon mankind, in that very place, and in defiance of that very people, before whom these things were said to have been done.

Moreover, wherever the Apostles published their accounts, they

* For a full proof of these things, we refer to Lardner's credibility of the Gospel History; or to Paley's abridgement of that work.

professed to have power to open the eyes of the blind, to heal the sick, and raise the dead: and they promised to communicate these powers to others; and if these pretensions had been false, they were the most likely of any in the world, to have been detected.

If the accounts which the Apostles give respecting the Christian Religion were not true, they must either have been deceived themselves, or have formed the design to deceive others. That they could not have been deceived themselves is very evident, from the nature and circumstances of the facts which they relate. They must have known whether they heard our Saviour's discourses, and saw his wonderful works: whether he had shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. They must have known whether after his resurrection he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; and they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. This plain and remarkable discourse, was not likely to have been either misunderstood, or soon forgotten. But if both their eyes and their ears had deceived them on this occasion, they must have known, whether they themselves possessed these miraculous powers. And whether after they had received this commission, they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by signs following. And therefore, it cannot with any reason be maintained, that they were deceived themselves.

Nor upon any reasonable grounds, can it be urged, that they had formed the design to deceive others: because they could have no motive for the formation of such a design, nor for the execution of such a project. They had followed a master who was despised and rejected; a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; who had nowhere to lay his head; and who, on account of his claim to divine power, had been crucified as one of the vilest malefactors. And, by continuing in the same cause, they could have no better prospect for themselves: for they had no other means of protection than what he possessed; they had no doctrine to offer, but that which had produced so much aversion: and their enemies were neither less malicious, nor less powerful. In their circumstances, they could only expect to be hated of all men for the sake of Christ, and to be accounted the filth and offscouring of all things: to be in perils by their own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren: in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. They knew that their lives would be in jeopardy every hour, and that such was the prejudice of mankind against them, that those

who killed them would think they did God service. Yet none of these things moved them: neither tribulation, nor persecution, nor famine, nor peril, nor sword, could separate them from the love of Christ Jesus their Lord.

That they should commence such a course of life, and persevere through so many sufferings, may be satisfactorily accounted for, on the ground that they knew the gospel to be true; because, in that case, they had the sure hope of eternal life, and could say, Having this hope we faint not, for though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day; for our light afflictions which are but for a moment, are working out for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. But if they knew their doctrines to be false, what could induce them to bear so many hardships through life, and at last to seal their testimony with their blood, when they could have no prospect of any advantage either in this world or in that which is to come? From these considerations, we conclude that the Apostles could neither have been deceived themselves, nor have formed the design to deceive others.

It is likewise to be observed, that the Apostles are to be classed, either among the righteous or the wicked. And if they were wicked, how is it that they laboured so incessantly, to reveal the wrath of God from heaven against all unrighteousness of men; and to exclude the workers of iniquity from the kingdom of heaven? How is it that their doctrine breathes nothing but the spirit of purity, righteousness, goodness and truth? that they teach us by the most powerful motives and the most awful sanctions, to deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world? If the Apostles were good men, why did they invent so many falsehoods, and practice so many frauds and impostures, in order to deceive mankind? Why did they expose their lives to so many needless dangers, and draw their followers into so many dreadful calamities, which they could not but foresee, and for which, if their doctrine was false, they knew there was no reward, either here or hereafter? It is equally repugnant to every principle of reason to suppose, that they would have propagated the gospel, whether they were good men or bad men, unless they believed it to be true. And, in their circumstances, they could not have believed it, without the full assurance of its truth; for they were personally acquainted with the facts on which it is established; and could not have been deceived themselves: and hence, from the testimony of these witnesses, we conclude, that Christ was a Teacher come from God.

2. The truth of the Christian revelation is proved by its propagation in the world: considering the strength of the opposition it had to encounter, the weakness of the instruments employed, the rapidity of its progress, and the great extent to which it prevailed. The doctrines of Christ were a stumbling block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness, exciting abhorrence and contempt.

The Jews had an aversion to the gospel, because it frustrated their hopes of a temporal Messiah: they had expected one who would

extend his conquests over numerous kingdoms; and make Judea the most powerful and flourishing nation in the Universe: but the gospel exhibited a Messiah, who had lived in poverty, and died upon a cross. And it required the abolition of the ceremonial law, which they confided in as the means of their salvation. And by publishing the death of Christ, it left an indelible stain on the character of the Jewish people, who with wicked hands had crucified the Lord of life and glory. Hence, they were extremely exasperated against all who called on the name of Christ. When Stephen advocated the cause of Christianity, they gnashed upon him with their teeth, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death. And when Paul went up to Jerusalem, the whole city was in an uproar, and he would have been torn in pieces, had he not been protected by a band of soldiers. The Jews, in their synagogues, cursed the Christians three times a-day: and they sent messengers to distant kingdoms to defame their character, by the most slanderous accusations; and exerted all their ecclesiastical and civil power to extirpate them from the face of the earth.

And when those who published the gospel turned to the Gentiles, they met with no better reception. They were known to belong to that sect, which was everywhere spoken against. They appeared as objects of ridicule and contempt, because the author of their religion had been crucified. Their doctrine contradicted, and tended to subvert, all those systems of philosophy, which the learned heathens admired. It condemned all those established customs, which so strongly interested the passions, and prejudices of the multitude. The gospel could only be received by the total abolition of every other religious system. It denied the very existence of all the heathen gods. It pronounced their whole Theology, a compound of fraud and falsehood. It declared all their worship to be vain and impious; no better than that of offering sacrifice to devils: so that if the gospel prevailed, heathen temples were to be forsaken, their mythology exploded, their worship abolished, and all the authority of their priests annihilated.

When this great work was undertaken, of overturning every other religious establishment in the world, the Jews were in possession of their own land: imperial Rome was in the plenitude of its power, and the Grecian arts and sciences shone forth in their meridian splendour. And all the power and wisdom of the world were employed against the gospel. Philosophers published their invectives against it; and the most violent and bloody persecutions were raised against all who professed themselves Christians; and they were everywhere treated with the most barbarous cruelty; and were as sheep among wolves. They were tore in pieces by wild beasts in the Roman amphitheatre; they were thrown down precipices, flayed alive, or crucified. They were consumed at a stake; sometimes they were dressed in pitched garments, and set on fire; or their flesh was tore off the bones by red hot pincers: and in a great variety of ways they were tortured to death, by every lingering torment which malice could devise. Great multitudes in various

places, endured these torments; and all who made any profession of Christianity, were liable to have them inflicted upon them, whatever was their age, sex, or condition.

And to effect this amazing revolution in the religious world, and to go in the face of all this opposition, there were a few fishermen and tent makers, pennyless and friendless; without any encouragement from the rich and great; destitute of human learning and eloquence, and unsupported by any secular power.

It may be supposed that Paul was an exception, as he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel: but his Jewish education could be of little service to an Apostle of the Gentiles; for whatever related to the Jewish law, was disregarded, and almost unintelligible to the Greeks and Romans. And it does not appear that he possessed any captivating eloquence: his enemies said that his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible. And he admits that his speech was rude, and declares that his preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom: so that in the work assigned him, he had no decided superiority over the other apostles, who had nothing to depend upon but supernatural aid.

Hence they could say, We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty: and the base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

Notwithstanding the weakness of the instruments employed in propagating the gospel, and all the opposition they had to encounter; it spread with great rapidity, through the various nations of the earth. Men of every rank and condition received the Christian faith. Imperial Rome submitted to its sway; and in every province of that vast empire, the gospel kingdom was established. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!

What particularly claims our attention, is the time and place, when and where, Christianity was propagated. It had its commencement at Jerusalem: the principal scene of Christ's labours and sufferings, and when every fact related was of recent date. The apostles did not go first to distant places, where no proper inquiry could be made into the truth of their story; nor did they remain quiet at Jerusalem, till all the circumstances of the case were forgotten; but in a few days after the event had transpired, Peter announced the resurrection of Christ, to all the Jews assembled at the day of Pentecost; and the same day three thousand were added to the church; and in a few days after, the number who had embraced the gospel, in Jerusalem, was about five thousand. And soon after we read that believers were more and more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. And among these were many of the Jewish priesthood.

By a persecution which arose at Jerusalem, the disciples were scattered abroad, and they went everywhere among the Jews, preaching the Word; and Churches were formed throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, within four years after the death of Christ. And in about twenty years, there were tens of thousands of Jews, in and about Jerusalem, who had embraced the gospel. Believers were thus multiplied, when it excited the jealousy of Herod, who with violence and cruelty stretched forth his hands to vex the Church, and inflicted both imprisonment and death. And when the High Priest had power to employ emissaries, who breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord; and who made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison: and who went as far as Damascus, to bring all the Christians, that could be found there, bound, to Jerusalem. Believers were thus multiplied where Christ had been crucified; and where Stephen had been stoned; and where no man could profess Christianity but at the hazard of his life. And is it credible that so many Jews, at that time and at that place, would have forsaken the religion of their forefathers, to embark in the Christian cause, without any earthly motive, and at the risk of every thing dear to them in the world, unless they had seen the truth of it proved by miraculous power?

At an early period, the gospel rapidly spread at Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Philippi, and other Grecian states; when they were the seat of science, and the nursery of arts; and where it was not likely to be received, without the strictest scrutiny, and a full conviction of its truth.

Christianity prevailed at Rome, which was then the metropolis of all the civilised world. There the pagan religion reigned in all the plenitude of its power and grandeur. The Emperor himself was sometimes the high-priest; and all the prosperity of the state was ascribed to the protection of the gods. All foreign religious rites were forbidden, which had not received the sanction of the Senate. And it was not likely that Christianity would receive the sanction of the Senate, as it denied the truth of every article of their religion; and the very existence of every object of their worship: and wherever it prevailed, every other altar must be overthrown. Yet under these circumstances, the gospel spread at Rome. So early as the reign of Nero, about thirty years after the ascension of Christ, there were not only multitudes of believers in the city, but some of them even in Cæsar's household. To shew the great number of Christians which were in Rome at this time, and the cruelties they endured, we shall state the account as it is given by one of their enemies.

Tacitus, the Roman historian, says, that Nero lay under the imputation of having set the city on fire: and, "To put an end to the report, he laid the guilt, and inflicted the most cruel punishment upon a set of people who were called Christians. The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator, Pontius Pilate. Some who confessed their

sect were seized, and afterwards a vast multitude were apprehended, who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome, as of hatred to mankind. Their sufferings at their execution were aggravated by insult and mockery: some were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs; some were crucified; and others were wrapped in pitched cloth and set on fire when the day closed, that they might serve as lights to illuminate the night."

We suppose that by the hatred of mankind, which Tacitus imputes to Christians, he means their opposition to the customs of the heathen world; but his account shews, that in a few years after the death of Christ, there were multitudes of Christians in Rome, who endured the greatest sufferings for the sake of their religion. And at a period, when the truth of all the statements might have been inquired into at the mouth of living witnesses. And under all these circumstances, what could have induced the Romans to embrace Christianity, and to persevere in their profession, if the truth of it had not been proved by miracles?

The gospel made its way among every nation, and people, and tongue. It was preached to every creature under heaven: whether they were high or low, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, barbarian or Scythian. Of this we shall produce the following testimonies. About eighty years after the ascension of Christ, Pliny the younger, was governor of Pontius and Bithynia, two districts which were at a great distance, both from Rome and Jerusalem; and there Christianity had so far prevailed, that the heathen temples were almost forsaken. Persecution was resorted to as the only means of preventing its progress: but so many, of all ranks, were accused of being Christians, that Pliny did not know how to proceed; and he wrote to Trajan, the Roman Emperor, in these words, "Suspending all Judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially on account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering: for many of all ages, and of every rank, of both sexes, likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless, it seemed to me, that it may be restrained and corrected: that numbers of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those that shall repent."

Justin Martyr, who wrote about thirty years after Pliny, says,—"There is not a nation, either of Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes, and live in tents, amongst whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe, by the name of the crucified Jesus."

About thirty years after Justin Martyr, Tertullian, writing to the governors of the Roman empire, says,—"We were but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities, islands, towns, and boroughs, the camp, the senate, and the forum."

Clemens Alexandrinus, wrote some years before Tertullian, and he speaks as follows,—"Christianity did not remain in Judea, as philosophy did in Greece, but it spread throughout the whole world,

in every nation, and village, and city, both of Greeks and Barbarians, converting both whole houses and separate individuals, having already brought over to the truth, not a few of the philosophers themselves. If the Greek philosophy be prohibited, it immediately vanishes; whereas, from the first publishing of our doctrine, kings and tyrants, governors and presidents, with their whole train and the populace on their side, have endeavoured with their whole might to exterminate it, yet doth it flourish more and more."

Origen, who wrote about thirty years after Tertullian, says, — "In every part of the world, throughout all Greece, and in all other nations, there are innumerable and immense multitudes, who, having left the laws of their country, and those whom they esteemed gods, have given themselves up to the religion of Christ: and this not without the bitterest resentment from the idolators, by whom they were frequently put to torture, and sometimes to death: and it is wonderful to observe, how, in so short a time, the religion has increased, amidst punishment and death, and every kind of torture. But as it was the will of God that the Gentiles should have the benefit of it, all the counsels of men against the Christians were defeated: and by how much the more emperors and governors, and the people everywhere strove to depress them, so much the more have they increased, and prevailed exceedingly."

We see therefore, that Christianity prevailed among all kinds of people; but whether it went among the polished nations, or those who were fierce and rude, as the Indians and Goths, Tracians and Scythians, Gauls and Britons; it had everywhere to encounter a violent opposition. Idolatrous worship was previously established, and all the customs, maxims, passions, and prejudices of mankind were inimical to the gospel; which could not be received unless men would renounce their former opinions, abandon their habits, and live a life of self-denial, and expose themselves to persecution, torture, and death. We therefore assert, without fear of any rational contradiction, that Christianity under these circumstances could not have been propagated, with such rapidity, and to such an extent, if it had not been supported by supernatural power.

The propagation of any other religion can bear no comparison with Christianity. The heathen religion had had no previous establishment to encounter: it was adapted to all the vicious passions of human nature; it required no change in the habits of life; it allowed its votaries to wallow in all manner of carnal indulgences, without sacrificing any of their worldly prospects, or exposing themselves to persecution. Wherever it found a sufficiency of ignorance and vice, it might there take up its abode.

We admit that the Mahometan religion was extensively spread; but this is easily accounted for, without supposing it was favoured with any supernatural aid. Mahomet was related to the most powerful family in Mecca; and by marriage obtained great riches, and by a political association, he became Sovereign of Medina. And

* See Paley's Evidences of Christianity.

placing himself at the head of powerful armies, he established his religion by fire and sword. He amply rewarded his followers with the spoils of war, and with their female captives; and promised them a carnal paradise in the world to come.* There is therefore, nothing wonderful in the prevalence of his system. It bears no comparison to the propagation of Christianity, which commenced without any worldly advantages, and prevailed without the support of any earthly power; and which required purity of heart and life, in all who embraced it, with a constant exposure to hardships, and privations, torture and death.

As a proof, that the first heralds of the gospel must have had the power of working miracles, let the success of the Apostles be compared, with what Christians have been able to do in modern times. There has been a Society long established, and in very active operation, for the purpose of promoting Christianity among the Jews. This institution has been conducted by men of eminent piety and great talents, and who have possessed every human facility for the accomplishment of their object; but more Jews were converted by one of the Apostles, in a single day, than has been done by the whole of this society since its commencement.

Christians of almost all denominations, have been long engaged, in sending out missionaries to the heathen nations; and those who are thus sent out, carry the same gospel and have many advantages over them that belonged to the primitive Church. They do not go without either purse or scrip: they have many superior endowments to the people among whom they are to labour: they can teach them many useful arts and sciences. And in such places they can scarcely fail to be regarded as a race of superior beings. They have the credit of being connected with opulent societies, and of belonging to powerful nations; who can supply their wants, and in a great measure afford them protection. And in many places, the converts they make are exposed to no such persecutions, as the primitive Christians had to endure. But with all these advantages, how exceedingly small is their progress, compared with that of the Apostles? It is nearly three hundred years since missionaries were first sent to China; and to the present day, very little impression has been made on that empire. These things prove that the Apostles must have had the power of working miracles: and He that gave them this power, must have been a Teacher come from God.

* "His voluptuous paradise; his robes of silk, his palaces of marble, his rivers and shades, his groves and couches, his wines, his dainties; and, above all, his seventy-two virgins assigned to each of the faithful, of resplendent beauty and eternal youth; intoxicated the imaginations, and seized the passions, of his Eastern followers."—PALEY.

SERMON III.

"WE KNOW THAT THOU ART A TEACHER COME FROM GOD."

JOHN iii. 2.

IN the two former discourses on this subject, in order to prove the truth of the Christian Religion, we have considered the necessity and utility of a divine revelation; the fulfilment of prophecy; the miracles which were wrought for its confirmation; the credibility of the witnesses who have given their testimony in its favour; and the propagation of this religion throughout the world: and we now proceed to make some further remarks on its propogation: which will approach in some degree to a recapitulation; we shall not go over the same ground, but we may sometimes touch upon it.

In reference to the propagation of Christianity, let us take a retrospect, and see in what manner, and by what means, it was proposed and intended to be disseminated and established. St. Matthew informs us, that Christ, when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. These twelve, Jesus sent forth; and commanded them saying, as ye go, preach, and say, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses: nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff: for the workman is worthy of his meat. Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils and scourge you in their synagogues. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. If they have called the master of the house, Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword: and a man's foes shall be those of his own household.

We have selected the above from the tenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, from many other things equally worthy of notice. And we need not advert again to the historical truth of this account, for two reasons; first, because the genuineness and authenticity of the writings, out of which this statement is taken, have been already, as we believe, sufficiently proved: and secondly, whether Christianity be true or false, it must have had such a commencement as is here stated; namely, by the preaching of the Apostles, in the midst of sufferings, who gained credit either by real or pretended miracles. No reasonable man will deny, that these were the only means employed

to spread and establish the gospel; nor maintain, that the first heralds of it, had any better prospect before them than what is here held out. If Christ did not give the apostles power to work miracles, he gave them nothing whatever that could be of any service to them; and if he did not let them know beforehand the sufferings they would have to endure, they very soon experienced them in all their severity; and their perseverance after such a disappointment, is, if possible, more unaccountable than the commencement of their labour with such a prospect before them. So that an objector could gain nothing, by denying that Christ delivered such a discourse to his disciples, as we have stated. The Apostles, incontestibly, professed to work miracles; and therefore there cannot be the shadow of a reason to doubt, that Christ promised them that power. And those who deny the reality of these miracles, have to account, if they can, for the rise and progress of Christianity without them. After all, it must be admitted, that the Apostles were in a very destitute, and defenceless condition; with a prospect of sufferings, and of death before them; when they went forth to overturn every religious establishment in the world: yet under such circumstances they made the attempt to propagate the gospel, and the attempt succeeded.

And the religion thus propagated must have been either true or false. On the supposition that it was true, the plan laid down for its dissemination, was admirable and laudable — the result of the greatest wisdom and benevolence. It is true that eventually it was to create great disturbances, to occasion domestic afflictions, and national calamities. But these distresses were inexpressibly more than balanced by the full and final salvation of all believers; by the opportunity it afforded of escaping the wrath to come, and of obtaining eternal felicity. The Apostles were furnished with adequate powers for the accomplishment of their arduous task. However deficient they might be in earthly supplies and qualifications, they had ample resources in their miraculous gifts. When they stated the facts of the Gospel and expounded its doctrines, in proof of its truth, they could say, bring before us the blind, lame and diseased, and we will remove their maladies in a moment; we will cleanse lepers, cast out devils, and raise the dead. And with such credentials they were sure to establish their authority. They could not fail to gain credit, wherever they met with men of candour, reflection, and discernment. The works they performed would create surprise, which would lead to examination, and would end in conviction. With such powers, they might meet with opposition, but they were sure to succeed in the end.

With respect to the personal state and condition of the Apostles themselves, they had, indeed, all manner of hardships, privations, and sufferings before them: but in the truth of their doctrine they had abundant encouragement and support. When they gave up their earthly possessions, it was that they might have treasure in heaven. In whatever afflictions they were involved, they might reckon that the sufferings of this life, were not worthy to be compared with that glory to which they were to be brought hereafter. When

they were as sheep among wolves, their enemies could only kill the body, and at the prospect of death they could individually say, I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. And if Christianity was to be proved to come from heaven, it was much better to employ such as were poor and despised, than those who possessed worldly power, learning, and wealth. If Jewish doctors, Grecian philosophers, and Roman grandees, had been chosen to propagate the Gospel, it might have been supposed that worldly policy, and human power, had borne down all opposition, and gained it an establishment. Hence, on the supposition that the Gospel is true, in the plan which our Saviour laid down for its propagation, we have every indication of wisdom and goodness.

But, if the Gospel be not true, in the plan he proposed, we see nothing but fraud and mischief, folly and madness. All the kingdoms of the earth were to be convulsed; private families were to be harrassed with dissensions ; and the nearest relatives to deliver up each other to death. Christ's own followers were to be of all men most miserable. After leaving all to follow him, and enduring all manner of hardships, they were to perish by the hand of the executioner, under the most excrutiating and lingering torments ; and without any reward in the world to come. All this was to be done to spread a falsehood, known to be such by the author of it, and from which he himself could expect no advantage, either here or hereafter. So far from it, his own life was to be the first sacrifice : before his disciples went into the way of the Gentiles, or entered into any of the cities of the Samaritans, he was to go up to Jerusalem ; to suffer many things from the chief priests ; and to be put to death. And we ask whether such a scheme could have been formed, by any one that had a grain of humanity in his composition ; or the least dawn of reason in his mind ?

But leaving the author of this scheme out of the question, How were the Apostles to be induced to embark in such a cause ? With nothing but a suffering life and a tragical death before them, were they likely to believe that he was the true Messiah, without some proof? Can it be supposed that he deceived them, when he professed to walk on the sea, to calm the tempest, to heal the sick, and raise the dead ? If so, could they be persuaded, that they themselves possessed miraculous power, when it was not the case. They had ample opportunities for trying what qualifications they possessed, when they went out without purse or scrip, to place a new religion on every throne in the world ; and if they had no such power, how could they expect to succeed ? As they remained several years in Jerusalem, before they began their peregrinations, they had sufficient time for reflection : and during that period, they saw their master crucified, Stephen stoned, and James killed with the sword, and all the fury and indignation of the Jewish rulers excited against them. By this time they must have known whether they could work miracles or not. And if without this power, they had em-

barked in such a rash enterprise, What induced them to persevere? What was it that rendered them all invincible to torture and death?

But if the Apostles be called impostors or madmen, in what light are we to view their converts, which included men of all ranks and conditions, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned: priests, philosophers, soldiers, and statesmen? In a few years, camps, courts, cities, and villages were full of Christians. They not only abounded in Rome itself, but even in Cæsar's household. All these converts, had to forsake the religion in which they had been educated, and to lead a new course of life, which required much self-denial and deadness to the world. And they had to embrace Christianity at the constant hazard of their lives, and the most grievous torments that could be inflicted. And would men of all descriptions, do all this without any evidence of the truth? would they believe the Apostles wrought miracles, if they never saw them performed? Would they engage in such a cause, under all the circumstances of the case, without the strictest examination, and the fullest conviction?—if so, it must be supposed, that madness pervaded all the nations of the earth, and all ranks of society, for so many years together; and that this madness produced the most pure and elevated sentiments, and the most virtuous lives; that it induced men to put off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light; to escape the corruptions which are in the world; and to be full of mercy and good fruits. And in this case, is it not desirable that the same kind of madness should become epidemic in the present generation?

From what has been advanced, the conclusion is, that such a plan of propagating the gospel could never have been laid down by any rational creature without a dependance on supernatural aid. And that if this plan had been tried, without such aid, it never could have succeeded. But that it did succeed, is incontestible. A few Jewish peasants, destitute, friendless, and unaided by any human power, went forth and turned the world upside down: every dagon fell prostrate before the ark of the Lord. And this was done at a time when the pagan religion was so firmly established, by the antiquity of its origin, the splendour of its ceremonies, the number of its votaries, the passions and prejudices of the people, the interests of the priests, the learning of philosophers, and the power of every earthly throne. Such a power attended the Word as all its enemies were not able to gainsay nor resist; which proves that it was the work of the Lord. At the commencement of Christianity, one of the Jewish rulers said, If this work be of men it will come to nought: but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it. And the event has proved that it could not be overthrown, nor its progress prevented by all the powers of earth and hell. And therefore, from all the circumstances of its propagation, we know that the author of it was a Teacher come from God.

2. Another evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, arises from its internal excellencies. On this part of the subject, our limits confine us to a few observations. On a proper comparison

with all other systems, the Christian revelation will be found to be the most honourable to God; and the best adapted to raise man to all the perfection of which his nature is capable. It not only teaches the most refined and beneficial morality, without any mixture of opposite principles, but it most powerfully disposes the heart to whatsoever things are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report. It has reclaimed the most profligate, and subdued the most stubborn and rebellious; and such, under its influence, have frequently become the most illustrious examples of humility, patience, fortitude, benevolence, and of every virtue which can exalt and adorn human nature. There is nothing either amiable or useful, in the disposition and conduct of mankind, which Christianity does not inculcate; nor any thing base and pernicious, which it does not prohibit.

The Christian revelation most effectually promotes and secures human felicity, amidst all the troubles and vicissitudes of life.—Those who seek happiness in earthly enjoyments, find them to be vanity and vexation of spirit: but when they flee to the gospel for refuge, from the disappointments, vexations, and remorse, which attend the riches, honours, and pleasures of the world, they obtain a strong consolation: a well founded hope, a peace that passeth understanding, and a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. God is their portion and heaven is their home, and the matter of their rejoicing is the testimony of a good conscience. They are fortified against all the changes which can take place in this lower world; because their happiness flows from the favour of that Being, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Hence they have a treasure which none can take away: and their hope is an anchor to the soul in all the storms of life. In the day of affliction and distress they know that all things work together for good, to them that love God; and that the sufferings of this life, are not worthy to be compared with future glory. In the hour of death they can say, We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Christianity is equally valuable in every region of the earth, and to men of every rank and condition, whether they are high or low, rich or poor; all need the benefits it has to bestow; and whoever will, may come and take of the water of life freely. It sheds its benign influence on the community at large. If the gospel were to be universally believed and obeyed, the calamities with which mankind afflict each other, would be banished from the earth. Swords would be beat into plough-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and the nations would learn war no more; for men would love one another with a pure heart fervently, and peace and concord would everywhere prevail.

It may be observed, that besides the Christian, there are three other religious systems in the world, the Pagan, the Jewish, and Mahometan; and among these three, the Jewish system has an infinite superiority; not only as it respects the evidence of its divine

origin, but likewise with regard to all the purposes which religion ought to serve among mankind. Yet there is no doctrine in the Jewish religion, that does not shine with superior lustre in the Christian revelation. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. And from whence could this transcendant excellency of the Christian religion arise? Can it be supposed that an obscure Jewish peasant, brought up at the sequestered village of Nazareth, unacquainted with men and books, whose associates were the fishermen of Galilee, and who was cut off at an early period of life; that he could have taught a religion to mankind. which so far surpasseth all the learning of antiquity, and all the discoveries of modern times, unless he had possessed supernatural assistance? And therefore without adverting to any other evidence, when we consider the superior excellence of the Christian religion, we may affirm in the full assurance of faith, that Christ was a Teacher come from God.

3. From what has been stated, it follows, that there is sufficient evidence of the truth of the Christian religion. And in proportion to its evidence is the sin and folly of rejecting it. As far as this life only is concerned, it is infinitely better to have religion than to be without it; but if the Christian religion be discarded, no other can be maintained. Those who reject it can introduce no substitute in its place; nothing that will be equally beneficial to the human race, nothing that will so successfully cultivate every virtuous disposition, and promote the exercise of temperance, justice, mercy, and truth; nothing that can open such a source of consolation to the human heart, and support the mind under the miseries of life and the agonies of death. So that if this religion was all a deception, it would be the best to be deceived; and it would be the greatest injury to mankind to undeceive them. Because whether the gospel be true or false, those who believe it, are happier in this life, and they run no risk for that which is to come. All the present evil, and the future danger, remain with those who reject the gospel.

It is true, that some may say that by disbelieving the Scriptures, they have banished all their distressing fears. But let it be remembered, that the Gospel does not excite fear, except in those who wish to continue in sin: to all others it is glad tidings of great joy. And if men living in sin are without fear, they are not out of danger. Besides, how do they know that their fears will not return, with more irresistible force and tormenting power? Many have been stout-hearted in their health and strength, and yet in their dying hour, have fallen under all the horrors of black despair. And there is an awful disparity between those fears which drive men from their sins, and those which are the forebodings of eternal misery. If those who reject the Gospel will hearken to no counsel, nor regard any admonition, all we can do for them is, earnestly to pray, that they may have grace to recover themselves out of the snare of the devil: that He who commanded light to shine out of darkness, may shine into their dark hearts, and give them the light

of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. Let all who believe the Gospel to be a divine revelation, be careful not to live in the neglect of its ordinances, nor in the breach of its precepts. For whatever proves the truth of the Gospel, proves, that without holiness no man can see the Lord; and that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men. No faith will procure any acceptance with God, but the faith which works by love, and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. Every one that heareth the sayings of Christ and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? Therefore rest not short of vital Godliness; pray that the Lord would give you a new heart, and renew a right spirit within you. The gospel which you believe to be true, and by which you must be judged, commands all men everywhere to repent; and declares, that except ye repent, ye shall all perish. It is a godly sorrow for sin only, that can prepare the way for the consolations of religion. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your iniquities may be blotted out, and the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Let believers be abundantly thankful for the glorious Gospel of the blessed God: which reveals the unsearchable riches of Christ, and brings life and immortality to light. This divine revelation gives the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins: it is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them who are sanctified. Let this word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; and let your conversation be as becometh the gospel; adorning the doctrine of God your Saviour. By this means you will recommend religion to others, and promote your own happiness and security. For the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger. Christ says, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me: and if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. For those who obey from the heart, the good commandment delivered unto them, have the best evidence of the truth. They taste of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost: they taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come: and their own experience is preferable to a thousand speculative arguments. They have the witness in themselves, which not only confirms the truth of the gospel, but likewise proves their own individual interest in it. By what is wrought within them, they know that they are passed from death

unto life. Therefore keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

TIMOTHY SCOTT, PRINTER, SHEFFIELD.

THE

DOCTRINES

OF THE

GOSPEL VINDICATED,

BY A REFUTATION OF

Socinian Sophistry:

IN A

SECOND REPLY,

TO

The Rev. Henry Clarke.

BY ABRAHAM SCOTT.

Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? Acts xiii. 10.

SHEFFIELD:

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PRICE EIGHTPENCE.

The Doctrines of the Gospel Vindicated, &c.

1. IT will no doubt be granted, that self-defence is the unalienable birth-right of every human being; and in some cases it becomes an indispensible duty, a law without which there could be no living: and while an individual exercises the right of self-preservation, he may confer a benefit on the community at large, by repressing lawless violence, and daring outrage. The duty of self-defence, again devolves upon me, in consequence of a second attack, which has now been made by my Socinian antagonist. Into this polemical contest I have been unexpectedly and unwillingly drawn, and have not engaged with a view to my own vindication only, but with an ardent desire to ascertain the truth, and to contribute to its defence and propagation. This should be the design of all religious controversy; and when this is the case, a personal conflict, by the Divine blessing, may be productive of public utility. Religious truth is always of inestimable value, the merchandize of it, is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. But it never appears so illustrious as when it returns victorious from a powerful contest: its splendour is never more brilliant than when it has passed through the fire. But when the truth acquires these advantages, it is by passing through a severe trial; it is by contending with a powerful adversary; which I cannot take upon me to say is the case on the present occasion; yet all it can do, is to vanquish such as come against it, of whatever description they may happen to be: it has not the choice of its opponent. And though in some cases it may gain no credit by victory, however decisive and complete, yet it cannot always avoid the combat, without giving encouragement to insolence and insult. Besides, when no other advantage is obtained, a little exercise may promote its vigour, and preserve its armour from rust.

In whatever manner truth may be vindicated, it cannot be e
pected to make a favourable impression on such as are firmly a
tached to erroneous opinions. Consider, diligently, says the Pr
phet, and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation change
their gods, which are yet no gods? Nevertheless, a defence of t
truth may preserve others from imbibing dangerous delusion
and in this very way it may prove a great benefit to the rising g
neration.

2. Mr. Clarke informs his readers that he anticipated a
answer; and in that answer he "*expected argument, t
manifestation of a Christian temper, and a regular connected e
amination of the question at issue;*" but in these respects he co
fesses his disappointment. How he came to have such expectatio
we are not informed. According to his own account, he foun
my former Publications to abound with false reasoning, bold b
unfounded assertions, erroneous representations, low scurrilit
and downright self-contradictions. Now if he thought this a pr
per description of all he had seen of my former writings, ho
could he expect so much excellence in my next Publication? A
ter such contradictory statements, it will be impossible, upon h
bare word, to believe any thing he says. "*The avowed object*
says Mr. Clarke, "*of my publication, is to prove, that Unitarianis
is scriptural, and Trinitarianism, unscriptural. To do any thing
the purpose, Mr. S. should have, at least, attempted to prove t
contrary. Instead of this, he has adopted the very different, b
much easier course.*" How far I have succeeded in proving th
Trinitarian system scriptural, and the other unscriptural, must b
left to the judgement of the reader; but to assert that I have not in th
least attempted to do this, is, as every reader will perceive, a bas
unfounded, and wilful falsehood; and he takes no care to avoid b
ing convicted of such a charge; for he quotes numerous passag
of Scripture, which he lets the reader know I have brought fo
ward in the support of my own system, and in opposition to th
other; and then adds, "*Mr. S. professes to give a proper compa
rison of the two systems, and even insinuates that he has made t
Trinitarian system appear the more agreeable to the word of God.*
From this, it will be seen, that when he asserted I had not in th
least attempted to prove Trinitarianism scriptural, and Unitaria
ism unscriptural, he not only knew it to be false, but was lik
wise so well aware that no person would believe him, that he wa
not careful to preserve the least appearance of consistency betwee
this assertion, and what he afterwards advanced. "*It is truly cu
rious,*" says my opponent "*to observe the perplexity in which M
S. involves himself. First he endeavours to persuade us, that Do
trines inferred from scripture are preferable to those expressed in th
very words of scripture.*" This passage may be noticed hereafter
I only mention it here as another instance out of a great many whic
might be brought forward, to shew his utter disregard of truth

or he very well knows that I have not laboured to persuade peo-
le to believe any such a thing as he here asserts. And after such
nfounded assertions, can he stand in a pulpit and look his con-
regation in the face, and tell them the dreadful consequence of
ttering wilful falsehoods? Rev. xxi. 8. Whatever a man may
e in other respects, if he wilfully violates the truth, he is totally
nqualified for every office connected with religion. Such a vile
ractice would cast a dark shade over a thousand excellencies; it
s degrading to human nature, a baseness which nothing can jus-
ify; a dereliction of moral principle, which no qualification can
ompensate. What must be the state of Socinian congregations,
here they are reduced to the necessity of employing such an ad-
ocate?*

3. The following quotation may give the reader to see that Mr.
Clarke can make much ado about nothing. "*But Mr. S. know-
ng that fair investigation, and free discussion, would not be likely
o prove very injurious to Unitarians, or very favourable to Trini-*

* When I determine on the propriety of Publication, I would not
ish to be guided by my own judgment alone, but in the present in-
tance I am going against the opinion of many intelligent friends, whom
shonld very much wish to please. Some days ago I received a letter
om a worthy Correspondent, who says, "Your friends in Manchester,
ink your late opponent, H. C. is not worthy your notice; that he is
o contemptible for you to spend your time upon him." I have reason
believe this is the opinion of my friends in general. Another friend,
elonging to another Community, respecting the last of my opponent's
ublications, writes as follows. "On reading it over, I find it contains
ery little, if any thing, but falsehood and abuse. If you think the au-
or worthy of any further animadvertions, I have no doubt but they
ould tend greatly to stop the spread of the pernicious doctrines of in-
delity. I must confess I stood in need of patience to go through the
Work." Respecting the man, the opinion of my friends coincides with
y own, when I say the man, I mean as a writer of controversy, for in
o other light do I know or wish to speak of him. But however unwor-
hy of attention my opponent may be, the subject in dispute is of vital
nportance to the Christian religion; and in whatever way it may be
ttacked, something may be said in its defence, which will neither be
seless nor uninteresting. I likewise calculate upon other advantages
hich may arise from the present contest. In the scene of action I ex-
ect a blow will be struck at the root of Socinianism, not so much from
hat I shall write, as from what my opponent will publish. What I
rite may never be read with attention by those of his party; but they
ay be expected to read what relates to their own side of the question.
nd whenever his Publications are read, they can scarcely fail to weaken
e cause which he professes to advocate; and if so, the more he writes
e better it will be. His Publications might likewise be useful to my
wn friends, if they would have the patience to read them, by promoting
eir aversion to the Socinian system. If these anticipated advantages
ould be realized, either in whole or in part, the labour will not be in
ain.

tarianism, he endeavours by frightful and horrifying representations deter his readers from examining the evidence in favour of the form system. This Work he commences by attempting to fix on those who he opposes the nick-name Socinian, I say nick-name, because Socin considered Jesus Christ to be simply a man; and yet maintains that re gious worship ought to be paid to him; whereas the Unitarians conceiv that the God and Father of Christ and of us, is the only proper object religious worship. With this circumstance one would think it impo sible that such a man as Mr. S. could be unacquainted. He must ha known that Unitarians disclaim Socinus's doctrine, and consequent are not Socinians. But perhaps he thought it a less honourab appellation than Unitarian, and therefore better suited to his pu pose. But has the sagacious Mr. S. to learn, that to apply co temptuous terms to any man, or body of men, is beneath the digni of a man of honour, and totally inconsistant with the character a profession of a Christian Minister."

In making charges, Mr. C. discovers sufficient dexterity; b freque ntly finds it convenient to leave them unsupported by an evidence; and when he attempts to prove any of them, he alway fails. The long and heavy complaint he here makes, is witho cause, and the accusations contained in it, are all falacious. It true, I called him a Socinian; but my only reason for that wa because I supposed him to be one, and after all he has said, I a still of the same opinion. According to his own statement he onl differs from Socinus, in refusing to give religious worship t Christ; but if he agrees with Socinus in every other respect, th term Socinian, is the most proper appellation by which he ca be distinguished. Socinus complains that some of his peopl would not worship Christ; but notwithstanding this difference, h called them his people, they lived in communion with him, an were called by his name. The only point it appears in which m opponent differs from Socinus, is what sets him at a greater di tance from real Christianity. The whole Christian Church wo shipped Christ for the first fifteen hundred years. Those in com munion with Socinus, were, I believe, the first who objected t this prac tice; and their followers remain the only exception to at the present day. When I made no difference between him an Socinus, it was so much in his own favour: for if I could hav found a more appropriate appellation than Socinian, it must hav been still more dishonourable. I suppose he will acknowledg that I never accused him of the crime of worshipping Christ; an that every thing I advanced was as applicable to himself, as if h had agreed with Socinus in every point as far as the question a issue is concerned.

Mosheim gives the following difinition of Socinians, Vol, I page 486. "According to the usual manner of speaking, all a termed Socinians, whose sentiments bear a certain affinity to t system of Socinus; and they are more especially ranked in th

lass, who either boldly deny, or artfully explain away, the doc-
rines that assert the Divine Nature of Christ, and a Trinity of
ersons in the Godhead. But, in a strict and proper sense, they
nly are deemed the members of this sect, who embrace wholly, or
vith a few exceptions, the form of theological doctrines, which Faus-
us Socinus either drew up himself, or received from his uncle, and
lelivered to the Unitarian brethren, or Socinians in Poland and
'ransylvania." If my opponent will give himself a more appro-
riate appellation, than Socinian, he shall have the honour of it,
hen I write on the subject in future. He calls himself an Unita-
ian; but as there are no Christians who do not worship one God,
o far all Christians are Unitarians; and so likewise are Jews and
Iahometans; and the appellation of a religious sect, should dis-
nguish them from others. The term Unitarian, is not only im-
roperly assumed by Arians and Socinians, but it is done likewise
ith a mischievous design: it is intended to convey the erroneous
lea, that they are the only people in the Christian world, who wor-
hip one God. But when the term is sufficiently understood, it
ay be used without harm. It is, however, needful at times, to
oint out what sect of Unitarians is intended; whether Ari-
n or Socinian, because the arguments which apply to one, may
ot bear upon the other: of which the following is an instance.

Dr. S. Clarke maintained, the Eternity of the Son and the Holy
pirit, but denied their self-existence, and a Conference on the
sputo was proposed between him and Dr. Hawarden. "When
ney met, Dr. Clarke, at some length, in very guarded terms, and
ith great apparent perspicuity, exposed his system. After he
ad finished, a pause at some length ensued. Dr. Hawarden then
uid, he had listened, with the greatest attention, to what had been
uid by Dr. Clarke; and he believed he apprehended rightly the
hole of his system; and that the whole of the reply he should
ake to it was asking a single question; that if the question should
e thought to contain any ambiguity, he wished it to be cleared of
s ambiguity before any answer to it was given; but desired
at when the answer should be given, it should be expressed
ther by the affirmative or negative monosyllable. To this pro-
ostion Dr. Clarke assented. Then said Dr. Hawarden, I ask, Can
od the Father annihilate the Son and the Holy Ghost? Answer me, Yes, or No. Dr. Clarke continued for some time in
eep thought, and then said it was a question he had never consi-
ered. Here the Conference ended. A searching question it cer-
inly was; and the reader will readily perceive its bearings. If
r. Clarke answered, Yes, he admitted the Son and the Holy Spirit
be mere creatures. If he answered, No, he admited them to be
lly divine." But though this question confounded a man inclin-
l to the Arian scheme of religion, it would not have been
e case with Socinians; for they would readily consent to the an-
hilation of the Son and the Holy Ghost, if they found them
stand in the way of their own opinions, and would not think

them too great a sacrifice to be offered at the shrine of their favourite notions : and hence appears the necessity of distinguishing between Arians and Socinians, which cannot be done by the term Unitarian.

It may seem strange to some, that any body of people professing the Christian religion, should be tenacious of an appellation which does not distinguish them from Mahometans ; but if the truth were known, it would perhaps appear, that Socinians entertain a more friendly feeling for Mahometans than they do for any denominationof Christians besides themselves. Of their ownfeelings, they are the best judges; and I desire to say no more on this subject, than what may be gathered from their own words and actions, In the time of Charles II. they projected a league with the Mahometan churches of Algiers and Morocco. The letters they wrote to the Mahometan Ambassador, are too long for me to transcribe. The following is from C. Leslie, in his preface to those letters. " I desire the reader to consider what account the Unitarians give of Mahomet, and his great judgment, in their following addresses to the Ambassador, to whom they say, that God hath raised up your Mahomet, to defend the faith with the sword, as a scourge to the idolizing Christians. And we, for the vindication of your law-giver's glory, strive to prove that such faults and irregularities, (not cohering with the fashion of the rest of the Coran building, nor with the undoubted sayings of your prophet), were foisted into the scattered papers found after Mahomet's death. And we do endeavour to clear, by whom, and in what time, such alterations were made in the first setting out of the Coran. This is the like vindication they make for the scriptures of God ; that many things were foisted in, which they do not like, as they frequently answer in their pamphlets; particularly as to the writings of St. John, all of whose authority they strike at, because they make most against them. So that by the same Salvo the Coran is vindicated, and the Scriptures! And Mahomet is here said to be raised up by God, to scourge idolizing Christians, and the Coran to preserve the true faith. And they say in the same place, that Mahomet would have himself to be but a preacher of the gospel of Christ. Such a preacher, indeed, as our Unitarians! And they say truly to the Ambassador, We your fellow-champions for the truth. And they have since carried on the same argument in their late writings, of preferring Mahometanism to Christianity, as you will see in the second letter. Nay, that they esteem even Paganism, as preferable to the Christian doctrine. And yet they take it ill, that we will not own them as Christian brethren." It may here be proper to add, that for all this kindness, the ungrateful Mahometans, have shewn no favour to their Socinian brethren.

Adam Neuser, who was employed to introduce Socinianism into Germany, being disappointed, went into Turkey, and enlisted among the Janisaries, but he seems to have hadno other reward than what he obtained by enjoying the society of the Mahometans.

Paulus Alciatus, from being a Socinian, turned Mahometan, but no record appears of a Mahometan converted to Socinianism.

4. It is now time to return to Mr. Clarke, of whom we have never lost sight, though he has been for awhile on the back ground. It is not our intention to trouble the reader with a refutation of all his disgusting absurdities; but to make a few selections by way of specimen, as they may happen to catch our attention, on glancing over his disgraceful Publication. "*I am not ashamed to acknowledge*," says my opponent, "*that I did laugh most heartily at Mr. S.'s solemn nonsense about the Trinitarianism of the ancient Jews, and their using circles and triangles to express and illustrate their belief of this mystery.*"

That he did laugh most heartily, will not be disputed, but this was the only advantage he obtained. He did not attempt to shew, that the Jews did not use these emblems for the purpose specified, nor that their use of them did not prove their belief of the Trinity; and if he thinks laughing a proper substitute for argument, let him laugh on. The Socinians have thought the opinion of the Jews on this subject, a matter of some importance to their own cause: in a letter they wrote to the Turkish Ambassador, mentioned before, while speaking of the antiquity of what they call their noble sect, they say, "All the Jews, under the Written Law, and the Old Testament, to this very day, were still worshippers of a one only God, without a Trinity of persons." But now when it is proved, that the ancient Jews believed in the Trinity, the Socinians have discovered that their opinions are only solemn nonsense to be heartily laughed at.

"*I repeat*," says Mr. C. "*that if the Trinitarian doctrine be true, the Bible alone must prove it to be so.*" But what need was there to repeat what had never been controverted. It is from the Bible we prove the doctrine in question, but on every disputed point, collateral, as well as direct evidence is invariably admitted; and to this every fair disputant will pay a proper deference. We prove from the Bible, that Christ is the Messiah foretold by the Prophets; but when we meet with what we judge to be a prediction of him in the Old Testament, we suppose our opinion receives additional corroboration, when we can prove that the ancient Jews understood the passage in the same sense. But Mr, C. proceeds, "*Could it be shewn that all Christians in every age and even the whole race of the Jews, from the days of Abraham, to the present moment, have been believers in a trinity; still a plain unambiguous passage of scripture, announcing that the one God consists of three persons, would be infinitely better evidence to the truth of that doctrine.*" Granting that this would be better evidence, it does not prove that the evidence arising from the other sources is to be set aside. If any plain unambiguous passsage of scripture could be found announcing that in the Godhead there is one person only; that Christ was no more than a man; and had no existance before he came into the world,

and made no atonement for sin when he did come, and is not worthy of religious worship, they would afford the best evidence on these subjects; but it is not for the want of such evidence merely, that we object to Socinianism; it is because their peculiar tenets cannot be proved by any evidence whatever.

That a single plain passage, of scripture affords better evidence than the uniform opinion of the whole Jewish and Christian Churches, is very easily affirmed, and may carry with it an air of plausibility, but as a rule of interpretation it is useless, for there can be no plain passage of scripture respecting which the whole church of God has always mistaken the sense; and however plain a passage may appear, we have reason to suspect our own judgment, if our opinion of its meaning is found to oppose the opinion of all who have preceded us in the investigation of divine truth.

With respect to plain passages it may be observed, that every part of Scripture is not of this description, and yet every part of it is to be received, and from every part we are to seek to derive all the advantages in our power. Why the scriptures were not made plainer on some articles of Faith is not our province to determine: any more than it is for us to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power; but if we search them with diligence, accompanied with humility and sincerity, we shall find them able to make us wise to salvation. The manna in the wilderness, had to be gathered and put through a course of preparation, before it was fit for food; so the sense of scripture has to be collected and to pass through a certain process, before it will constitute the bread of life. However plain the scriptures had been, we have no reason to believe that Socinians would have submitted to their authority, because they tell us the apostles gave their own opinions, which were not always right; "that St. Paul often reasoned inconclusively, and that it is commendable not to take the word, even of an apostle, unless it be corroborated by other proof."

5. My opponent complains that I have given "*frightful representations*" of their system. Admitting this to be the case, it is requisite to ascertain, whether what has been said was true, and whether it was a truth needful to be told. Nothing can justify a wilful deviation from truth; nor is the truth at all times proper to be divulged; but when destructive errors are propagated, men are to be faithfully warned of their danger, and in these circumstances, the most frightful representations may be the most correct, and the most useful. If this warning be neglected, and the people perish, their blood will be required at the watchman's hand.

As a proof of frightful representations, I am charged with asserting "*that Unitarians sap the foundation of the Christian Fabric.*"

But it is to be remembered, that when this assertion was made, reasons were assigned for it, which my opponent has not thought proper to encounter. These reasons were such as the following:

The scripture ascribes to Christ, the works of Creation, Providence and Redemption; gives him the title of the mighty God, Jehovah, Lord of Hosts; declares him to be immutable and to have existed from all eternity; to be possest of all power in heaven and in earth; and to have all the fulness of the Godhead. And if after all he is discovered to be a mere man, we can have no respect for a book so confusedly and erroneously written; and whatever destroys our veneration for the scriptures, saps the foundation of the Christian Fabric. My opponent seems to have taken offence at the following passage. "If Unitarians could get fairly rid of Christ and the Holy Ghost, their system would be more uniform and complete, more consistent and intelligible. Their pretensions to Christianity oblige them, in quoting the scripture, to speak in the highest terms of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; and, after all, they have nothing for them to do, in the redemption of the world, which might not have been done as well without them."

Mr. C.'s refutation of this charge is such a literary curiosity, as the reader will not meet with every day: he says, "*Excellent! Mr. S., you are here quite at home. To misrepresent is evidently your forte. It is really surprising, that whilst his pen was thus tracing words without meaning, Mr. S. did not suffer it to ramble on to produce a climax of absurdity. If Unitarians are sincere in their professions, the language of Mr. S. is a tissue of falsehood.*" By this specimen, it will appear, that my opponent will rave when he cannot reason. If my words, as he affirms, are "*without meaning,*" why have they given him so much offence? A man cannot design to give offence, nor to do any injury, when he means nothing at all: yet, if Mr. C. is to be credited, these words which have no meaning whatever, "*misrepresent*" their system, contain "*a tissue of falsehood, frightful and horrifying representations.*" How words without any meaning can be so grossly false, and horribly frightful, we are not informed; but are left to make our way through all those riddles and paradoxes, as well as we are able, by our own energies. We acknowledge that written words have proved frightful, when the meaning of them was unknown. When Belshazzar saw the handwriting against the wall of his palace, before he had either read the words, or understood the sense of them, his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him; so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another: though he did not know the meaning of the words, his guilty conscience anticipated the sentence of condemnation, Now if words can be so frightful, before the meaning of them is known, so likewise may words be which have no meaning at all. But this can only be the case, when men are convicted by their own consciences. Thus we have laboured to give some colour of consistency to Mr, C.'s declarations, and shall leave him to return his thanks at his own leisure.

It is commonly supposed, that controversy is a difficult task; but people may make it as easy as they please. When they meet with what they cannot answer, they may declare there is no meaning in the words, and then exclaim, "*vulgar rant, and trashy declamation;*" and so long as this will be admitted as a substitute for argument, Mr. Clarke will be the man, and wisdom will die with him.

Let any Socinian prove, if he can, that, on their principles, there is any thing for Christ and the Holy Spirit to do in the work of redemption, which might not have been done as well without them. Till this can be proved, their system will for ever present a revolting contrast to the Christian religion. The scriptures attribute our salvation to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him for us all—will he not, with him, freely give us all things? But our salvation is equally attributed to Christ, who is the Saviour of the world; and it is declared there is salvation in no other. But after all that the Father and the Son have done, the agency of the Holy Spirit is equally requisite in the work of redemption. It was expedient for Christ to go away, that he might send the Comforter from the Father. If we are saved, it is through sanctification of the Spirit; it is by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Salvation exclusively belongeth unto the Lord. All the ends of the earth are commanded to look unto God to be saved; for, besides him, there is no Saviour. But if the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost constitute one God, then they must act in unison; and the works of all the sacred three must be equally essential to our salvation. In this case, whatsoever the Father doeth, that doeth the Son likewise; and in all this work, the Spirit cooperates. The Trinity in Unity perform all spiritual and divine operations. "It is the same God which worketh all in all." I Cor. xii. 16. "Christ is all and in all." Col. iii. 11. "But all these worketh that one and the self same spirit." I Cor. xii. 11. In accordance with these views of the subject, the apostle says, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." II Cor. xiii. 14. But if Christ be but a mere man, and God one person only, then Christ and the Holy Ghost do nothing in the work of redemption, which might not have been done as well without them. Therefore, all that is said of Christ and the Holy Ghost in the scriptures, is a great encumbrance to the Socinian system; to avoid which, it is no wonder if many of them take refuge in open infidelity.

My opponent mentions, that they shew their attachment to the Christian religion, because they "*form themselves into congregations, build chapels, and maintain ministers;*" but what does this arguing prove? Is there no truth in the old proverb, which affirms, that wherever God has a church, the devil has a chapel. The

apostle speaks of some who brought in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them: and we may presume, that they formed themselves into congregations, built chapels, and maintained Ministers; for without such means, errors cannot be so extensively propagated. But, notwithstanding all their congregating and chapel building, they brought upon themselves swift destruction.

6. Mr. C. having finished his refutation of "*words without meaning*," in the next place, falls upon a passage which he pronounces "*almost unintelligible jargon.*" Now, if his modesty and tenderness have not led him to treat this passage better than it deserves, we may presume it is something superior to that which preceded it. in which there was no meaning whatever. "*In my pamphlet,*" says Mr. C., "*I have given a brief outline of the fundamental, distinguishing tenets of Unitarians and Trinitarians. Under the former head, are the following words, 'There is but one God, the Father.' And under the latter, 'There is but one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.' This, says Mr. S., is not an Unitarian opinion, formed from any passage which he has placed on his own side; it is the result of all which the scriptures say on the subject. Notwithstanding the almost unintelligible jargon of this passage, it is sufficiently easy to perceive its sophistry.*" This passage is thrown into confusion by a false quotation; whether it was by design, or by an error in the press, that the word Unitarian is substituted for Trinitarian, I cannot say; but the erroneous quotation occurs twice in a few lines; and then he pronounces it almost unintelligible jargon: and so he indeed has made it. But if the passage had been left as he found it, the fault he finds with it is what no person could have seen but himself. On this passage Mr. C. proceeds, "*It is here insinuated, that I maintain that the words under Tnitarianism are drawn as a Trinitarian opinion, from those placed under the head Unitarianism. But surely nothing upon earth could be more ridiculously absurd.*" That this was my insinuation, I grant, but to whom the absurdity belongs, will require a little consideration. When M. C. arranged the opinions of Unitarians and Trinitarians under opposite columns, on the same page, his avowed object was to shew which of the two opinions was most scriptural. Under the head Unitarianism, he placed the words of scripture on which their opinions are professedly founded. But under the head Trinitarian, he has placed their naked opinions, and left out all those passages of scripture on which these opinions are formed; though he had these passages before him, in the sermon on which he was animadverting. Such a practice could only be regarded as a designed artifice; it was weighing the cause in a false balance, which is an abomination to the Lord, and as manifestly unjust, as if a judge on the bench should supress all the evidence on one side of the question, and then call upon the jury to give their verdict on the partial evidence he had

laid before them. It therefore became proper for me to state that the evidence had not been fairly laid before the reader, so as to enable him to judge which system was most scriptural. Because Trinitarian sentiments were not formed from the passages brought into view, that is, not from these only, but from the whole tenor of divine truth, as far as it relates to the subject in question. If Mr. C. did not intend the reader to suppose that these opinions were drawn from any or all of the passages he brought into view; what was it he did intend, when he placed Trinitarian sentiments over against these passages, for the avowed purpose of shewing which system was most scriptural? How was the reader to judge, but by the evidence before him? And the only scriptural evidence produced was the passages placed under the Unitarian column. Therefore, all the ridiculous absurdity originated and ended with Mr. C. himself.

In giving a statement of the two systems, Mr. C. commences with great plausibility as follows, "*The only proper, and safe method of proceedure to be adopted in reading, investigating, and discovering the real meaning of scripture, is duly to consider the kind of language used, the object of the writer, and the general drift of his argument, uninfluenced by the reveries of a fanciful imagination, under the guidance of right reason.*

By the foregoing rules, let us, as proposed, proceed to examine the scriptures, in order to ascertain whether of the two systems denominated Unitarian and Trinitarian, is scriptural. Consistent with scripture both cannot be."

After such a specious introduction, if we had not known the man, we might have expected some fair enquiry and rational discussion, but instead of any thing of this kind, the very next is the most pitiful sophistry that ever disgusted the world. To shew which system is most scriptural, he set down under the head Unitarianism, passages of scripture only, and gives none of their sentiments; and yet his promise was, briefly to state the fundamental tenets of each. Under the head Trinitarianism, he gives their tenets and leaves out the scriptures on which these tenets are founded; and this is to show which system is scriptural. Can he possibly suppose that the public can be imposed upon by such a contemptible artifice? people will know that quoting scripture is not explaining it, and that it is by the comment they give by which men's tenets are known. As an Unitarian tenet, Mr. C. gives the following words. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have eternal life." This is not only to teach us what Unitarianism is, but likewise how it differs from Trinitarianism. But does he suppose any of his readers so weak as not to reply, You must give us your comment on that passage, before we can know your tenets; because all religious parties

low the text, and it is only by their comments, that we can know hat their tenets are. and how far they differ from each other. Af- r such a defence of his system, Mr. C. would have us to believe, at Unitarianism is not upheld by sophistry; and this perhaps ill be allowed when his weak artifices come to be seen, which are o contemptible for the name of sophistry. "No one possessed," ys Mr. C. "*of a mind above that of an infant, or an idiot, would nagine that Trinitarianism is formed from such passages as those hich I have placed on the side of Unitariunism.*" Of this let the ader judge when he sees his statement under Trinitarianism: his ords are as follows, "*God could not forgive sins until his injured stice was satisfied. Jesus Christ fulfilled the requirements of the divine w, endured the punishment due to sinners, and purchased for sinful men at pardon which otherwise could not be obtained.*" Over against these nets under the head Unitarianism is the passage mentioned before, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that hosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting 'e." Now the fact is, upon this passage all those Trinitarian te- ets placed over against it are founded; but not on this passage ily: and this is equally true of the whole of his statement. All ie Trinitarian sentiments he mentions, are formed from the passages e has placed on the side of Unitarianism; but not from these only. nd this is so evident, that we might suppose none would deny it, ho is possessed of a "*mind above that of an infant or an idiot.*" Ir. C. will excuse our using a little of his own language; for of this ort of language he has always enough and to spare; he has a ource that is not likely to fail; for it is out of the abundance of the eart that the mouth speaketh; and we only use a little of the reams, we leave the fountain untouched, in his own possession.

To see how much light Mr. C. can throw upon a subject, the reader nust unite to the last passage the next which follows. "*As soon ight we expect any one who should happen to hear a philosopher assert, iat the planetary bodies of our solar system all receive their light and heat rom one great source of light and heat, the sun, to conclude, that the phi- osopher meant to teach that those planets are warmed and enlightened by iree suns.*" Whatever light and heat this passage may contain, cannot give it my unqualified praise; because there is no com- assion shewn for the reader's infirmity. What Mr. C. is capable f producing, is one thing, and what we are capable of receiving, another. When he bursts upon us so suddenly in all this splendor, e does not seem to consider, that too much light may have a worse ffect than darkness; it equally deprives of sight, besides giving ain. One sun frequently verpowers our organs of vision; it is o wonder, therefore, if three suns shining all at once should strike squite blind; and what makes this more likely to be the case, hese three suns emerge from onoe of the thickest cluds which ever arkened the horizon of literature.

The next passage to be noticed will bear looking at. "*That the words under Unitarianism,*" says Mr. C., "*are verbatim from scripture, none will presume to deny; that Unitarians err in supposing them to teach that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only true God, can never be demonstrated, nor has Mr. S. attempted to prove.*" And I hope I never shall attempt to prove any thing of the kind; because this is an article of Faith equally received by both parties. However far any sect has proceeded in corrupting Christianity there is always some truth mingled with their errors; if there was not, they would do less injury: for what is genuine, in some measure covers, and enables them to mend what is base and counterfeit; and though they hold the truth in unrighteousness, the truth they do hold, is not to be assailed when we commence their refutation, our only buisiness is to explode their errors. Under the head Trinitarianism we may put down verbatim from scripture, that Jesus Christ is "the only true God and eternal life." That we err in believing him to be the true God, Mr. C. has indeed attempted to prove, but his opinion "*can never be demonstrated*" nor ever rendered probable so long as men receive the whole truth. Unitarians may put down verbatim from scripture, "*My name alone is Jehovah,* and my glory will I not give to another." but still their work is not done, for though this is scripture, it is not the whole scripture, and the whole scripture is to be received. Trinitarians firmly believe the last mentioned passage, and they proceed to set down verbatim from scripture, those which give the title Jehovah to Christ, and when the Prophet saw the glory of Jehovah, St John declares he saw the glory of Christ, and a command in the old Testament for the angels to worship Jehovah is declared by St. Paul to be a command for all the angels to worhip Christ.

If Mr. C. would advance any thing which would give me any trouble to refute, it would afford more entertainment to the reader. But all that I have seen yet, is equally weak as that which has been selected. But if there is any thing better, it will be more likely to be found in as long a quotation as my limits will permit, which is as follows: "*Mr. S. proceeds to say, that the proposition, There are three persons in the one God, is the result of all which the scriptures say on the subject. This is equivalent to saying, that although the doctrine of a Trinity is not propounded in any one passage in the Bible, it may be inferred from the whole. If this be not sophistry, I confess myself totally unacquainted with the meaning of the word. But I certainly must believe, that such a mode of proceedure would, in any court of judicature, be denominated sophistical and inconclusive. Suppose a case; a question of law is brought before an English court of judicature: the advocate on one side adduces from the statute book, in the very words of the law, numerous plain, unambiguous passages, in which the propositions for which he contends, are plainly laid*

down, clearly defined, and positively declared to be the sense and intention of the writings. The opposing advocate, after having broadly admitted, that he cannot produce any one passage, which will, if taken singly, prove his point, proceeds to cull out an immense number of detached and irrelevant scraps of law, which he strings together in such a manner, as to give them the appearance of suiting his purpose. He assumes whatever premises he pleases, deduces any conclusions he finds necessary, and then insists, not only that the court ought to determine that he is right, but also that it is in justice bound to prefer his farfetched, inferencial evidence, to the plain selfevident matter of fact proof produced on the other side. Who does not see, that every individual to whom such an appeal should be made, would indignantly spurn such flimsy sophistry, as a gross insult to his powers of reasoning and common sense? How far this suppositious case resembles the real one between Unitarians and Mr. S. every reader will easily judge for himself."

That every reader will easily judge for himself, we admit; But what judgment will he form on the subject? He will see, in the first place, that what is here said of the opposing advocate, does not apply to me, if Mr. C. is to be credited; for this advocate did endeavour, by scraps of law, to gain his cause; but Mr. C. has before informed his readers, that I have not in the least attempted to prove my own system scriptural, or the other unscriptural. The reader will likewise easily judge, what is not very favourable or creditable to authors; namely, that it is very easy to make a book; and as they can be so easily manufactured, he may wonder that Mr. Erwin, of London, has to complain that books enow are not published. The reader may likewise easily judge, that whenever my opponent comes into court, he will infallibly gain the suit, provided he be both judge and jury in his own cause. But as this is more than will be allowed, we may take the liberty to reply, that his random fabric is raised on a false foundation. My words, with which he commenced, and which he does not accurately quote are as follows. "Three persons and one God, is not a Trinitarian opinion, formed from any passage he has placed on his own side; it is the result of all which the scriptures say on the subject." This, Mr. C. remarks, is equivalent to saying, "that although the doctrine of the Trinity is not propounded in any one passage in the Bible, it may be inferred from the whole." But this is not the case; the former assertion is far from being equivalent to the latter. When we declare, that our faith in the doctrine rests on the whole evidence which the scriptures afford on the subject, it by no means supposes, that the doctrine is not propounded in any one passage in the Bible; it supposes the very reverse. For whatever is in the whole, must, of necessity, be in some of the parts. That the doctrine of the Trinity is propounded in numerous passages, both in the Old and New Testament, I have already shewn in my sermon on that subject. Now as Mr. C.'s building is founded on a subversion of the truth, had the materials been of a superior

kind, and much better put together, whenever the truth comes to be known, it must inevitably fall, " and like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind." But if we leave him at present on his sandy foundation, what advantage can he derive from his superstructure? The drift of it is, to prove that Unitarians have all the evidence on their side of the question; that they can adduce, in the very words of scripture, " *numerous plain unambiguous passages*," while the Trinitarians can produce no evidence whatever, which will answer their purpose. But how does this appear? Before we can determine which party has the best evidence, it must be known what is the subject in dispute. This Mr. C. seems wishful to keep out of sight, and to substitute another in its place. What he labours to substitute is, whether there is one God, and one only. But this is confessedly admitted on both sides; and, therefore, all the " numerous plain, unambiguous passages," which they bring forward, afford no evidence on the point in dispute; and as they know this, they can have no design in bringing them forward, but to blind the minds of them that believe not, and, if possible, of them also who believe. The point in dispute is, whether the scriptures teach us to believe, that in the Godhead there is one person only, or three. Unitarians maintain the former, and Trinitarians the latter. In proof of the Unitarian position, Mr. C. says they bring " *numerous plain, unambiguous passages*;" but he has omitted to tell us what they are, or where they are to be found, and we have never been able to discover any one of them. When he writes again we request him to supply this defect. We do not demand " *numerous plain, unambiguous passages*." being aware that this is more easily said than done. Let him produce such as he can procure, if it be only a single passage, where his own opinion of the subject is expressed, one way or other; either, that in the Godhead there is one person only; or, one which declares there are not three. If he cannot do this, we will give him all the advantage of fair inference. It is an universal rule of interpretation, to reconcile one passage with another; and while this rule is observed, let him at least produce a single passage, from which his own opinion can be fairly inferred. To save him much fruitless labour, we remind him, that he does not need to prove these articles of faith, on which we are all agreed. We believe there is one God only; and we as firmly believe in our Saviour's humanity, as we do in his divinity. If Unitarians could be brought to remember this, it would save much time and labour. They frequently bring " *numerous plain, unambiguous passages*," to prove, that there is one God, and that Christ was a man. This would be very proper, were they disputing with such as denied either of these positions; but when this is not the case, it is all labour in vain. All the mass of evidence they bring forward amounts to nothing; because it does not relate to the point in dispute.

With respect to the Trinitarian opinion, we may observe, that we are received into the Christian community, in the name of the Fa-

ther, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and it will be granted, that these three are distinctly mentioned in numerous plain and unambiguous passages. Now, if each of these three can be proved from scripture to be God in the highest sense of the word, the evidence of a Trinity in the Godhead is conclusive and complete. That each of these three can be proved to be God in the highest sense of the word, is sufficiently evident; because there is nothing wise, or great, or good, affirmed of any one of them in scripture, which is not for substance affirmed of all the three. If the highest titles, attributes, works, and honours, prove any one of them to be God in the highest sense of the word, they must prove it of every one of them; for they are all spoken of in terms of the same signification. To produce all these passages here, would exceed our limits; we have referred to them on former occasions, and we may present the reader with a copious collection of them in a subsequent paragraph. Now all these numerous passages which relate to the Divinity of Christ and the Godhead of the Holy Spirit, all prove the doctrine of the Trinity. With such evidence, we should be fully confident of success, were the cause to be left to any impartial Jury. Whether our cause could fail in any court where truth and justice could find admission, "*every reader will easily judge for himself.*"

7. Mr. C. lays before his readers, the comparative view which I had given of the two systems, in separate columns; and, to my great surprise, he has stated it fairly. Whether he has refuted any syllable of it, we shall now consider. He is, however, in some respect, entitled to the praise bestowed on the woman in the gospel; of whom it is said, "she has done what she could" But there is some difference between them: she had done what good she could, and he has done what mischief he could; and if he has done none at all, it is not for want of either will or exertion. If the reader is disposed to a moment's relaxation from all serious thoughts, he will excuse the following story, which, though trivial and farfetched, is both true and harmless, A certain person, whom I could name, at Ashton-under-line, in going one morning to Manchester, saw one of his neighbours sitting on the Canal bank, in the act of fishing; and at his return from the market in the evening, found his neighbour in the same place, and at the same employment, as he had been all the day. Wondering at such steady perseverance, he enquired what success his friend had met with, and was informed, that nothing had been caught. He then asked, if he had never had a bite, to which his friend replied, No, but I have had a glorious nibble. The labours of Mr. C. are attended with the same success, and seem to be rewarded with as much self approbation.

The view which I have given of the two systems, was concluded with these words, "From what has been stated, the reader may judge which of the two systems is most agreeable to the word of God. To which my opponent replies, "*No, Mr. S., the reader cannot, from what you have here stated, judge anything whatever respect-*

ing either system." This would have appeared a very strange assertion, if we had not been prepared to expect no better from such a writer. The statement of the two systems alluded to, is drawn up in ten separate articles of faith, and comprises nearly all the peculiar tenets held by Socinians; and therefore, when C. asserts that the reader cannot from what is here stated, judge anything whatever respecting either system, he surely cannot expect any man to believe him. He, however, proceeds to assert, "*There is, in fact, nothing about Trinitarianism or Unitarianism, that is, whether God be one person or three.*" Supposing this to be the case, it does not prove, that the ten articles laid down will not enable the reader to form some judgment respecting either system; for they differ from each other in many articles of faith. But his last assertion is no more true than his former one. The first article is, that Trinitarians believe that in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. Socinians believe, that Christ was in the beginning of the gospel dispensation, and was only a man. The fourth article is, Trinitarians believe that Christ was in the world, and the word was made by him. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and in earth. Socinians believe, that Christ had no existence before he came into the world, and could not be the Creator of anything, either in heaven or in earth. These two articles alone will enable us to form some judgment of the two systems in general, and of the doctrine of the Trinity in particular; for as the Socinians declare that Christ is only a man, it shews they do not believe that doctrine; and if they can prove what they assert that doctrine will be subverted. On the other hand, if Christ is God, the Creator of the universe, and was in the beginning with God, then there is more than one person in the Godhead, and the system of those who deny the Trinity falls to the ground. Mr. C. seems to recede from his first assertion, for he allows that what I have stated may be made to teach some of the disputed tenets, if not all of them. He says "*Nos.* 1, 3, 4, 5, *if put together in the literal sense of the word, may be made to teach the doctrine of Christ's preexistence, and the creation of the world by him, and that he is called God. But this is not proving the Trinity. A person may, and in reality there are numbers who do believe, both that Christ preexisted and created the world, and yet* maintain the exclusive Deity *of the Father.*" We grant, Arians believe what is here stated, but with what consistency they do this we are not informed, and it does not fall in with our plan at present to enquire. But Socinians do not believe that Christ preexisted, nor that he created the world, and it was against them I was writing, professedly to shew, that their system was unscriptural, it was therefore proper to mention these articles, for the avowed purpose was answered by shewing any of their tenets unscriptural, and more fully answered by shewing that ten of their articles were unscriptural, than if I had confined myself to one. If what was there laid down may be made teach that

Christ preexisted, and that he created the world, articles which Trinitarians believe, and which Socinians deny, with what face can my opponent make the following assertion? "*No. Mr. S. the reader cannot from what you have here stated, judge anything whatever respecting either system.*" It seems from this that he is not careful to preserve the least appearance of truth. Surely in civilized society, such a man can injure the credit of no doctrine except that which he vindicates. If the reader needs any more proof of this, let him take the following passage. "*With the exception,*" he says, "*of the word God, in No. 6., which Mr. S. knows, or ought to know, is not in the original, there is nothing in the whole array of passages, which, even in appearance, stands opposed to the fundamental tenets of Unitarianism.*" The passage in number 6. is, they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying Lord Jesus receive my spirit. Mr. C. here admits that the word God, in this passage, has the appearance of opposition to Unitarianism; and denies the whole array of passages besides to have any such appearance. To see with what degree of truth or consistency this assertion is made, the reader has only to be informed, that the first passage on the list, is, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Now, if the word God, in number 6. has the appearance of opposition to their system, so likewise has the word God in the first of John; the latter has as much the appearance of opposition as the former.

But I either know or ought to have known, that the word God, in No. 6, is not in the original. But was this any reason why the word God should have been suppressed in quoting the passage at that time? Had the object been to collect passages where the word God is applied to Christ, a sufficient number might have been found, where the word is in the original; but the design, in that place, was to shew, that dying Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, addressed his prayers to Christ, a practice which Socinians declare to be Idolatry. It was, therefore, more agreable to the usual practice, to quote the passage as it stands in our version; because the version corresponds with the original as far as it concerns the subject under consideration. The word man, applied to Christ in our version, is not always in the original; and the word God, applied to Christ in the original, is not always retained in our version, so as to appear to be applied to Christ. II Pet. i. 1. should have been rendered, The righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Whether Mr. C. in quoting this passage, is always careful to rectify the translation, I have not been informed. With respect to that passage, They stoned Stephen calling upon God, the translation may be varied but cannot be improved. The best translation is, where the sense of one language is precisely given in the words of another language. But there are peculiar phrases, the sense of which cannot be given in a literal version. A literal rendering of the passage before us, is, They stoned Stephen calling upon. Here something is to be un-

derstood, which is not expressed. As the phrase was used to denote a religious exercise it invariably denoted calling upon God. Our translation of this passage, therefore, gives the sense of the original. However, if the word God offends a Socinian, let him strike it out; the passage will answer our purpose equally well; whether Stephen is said to be invoking or calling upon God.

"*Let it be added,*" *says Mr. C.* "*that no Unitarian would hesitate to apply the appellation God to Christ, in the sense in which he has shewn it is applicable to him, as one to whom the word of God came.*" So far they will go, and no further; they will apply the term God to Christ, because he was one to whom the word of God came; and they wish it to be understood, that this is the only way in which the scriptures apply the term God to Christ. But if this be true, as the word of God came to all the Jews, the term God might have been applied to every one of that nation, in the same sense in which it is in scripture applied to Christ. But is this what any man can believe who reads the scriptures without prejudice? The language of prophecy with respect to Christ, was, they shall call his name Immanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us. But if he is only called God with us, as one to whom the word of God came, the title, as applied to him in particular, is a mere nonentity; there is nothing that distinguishes him from any other Jew. And if the Evangelist had not interpreted the word, all his readers might not have seen the emptiness of the appellation; but lest they should think it a title of some eminence and distinction, the word was translated, that they might know that Christ had such a title as was common to all the Jews. If this be viewed as a prophecy, it is no less unaccountable; great things were expected of the Messiah, one reason of which was, his title was to be such as was common to all the Jews. Had it been predicted of Christ, that it should be called John, or James, or Thomas, there had been a possibility of failure; but the prophet had a mind to go on more sure ground, by giving him a title which belonged to every Jew. Heathen oracles were often delivered in such ambiguous terms, that they could not easily fail of accomplishment, in whatever way the predicted event might happen to turn out. But the predictions of the Hebrew prophets sink below the meanest of the heathen oracles, if Socinian interpretations are admitted. The Prophet Isaiah says, Unto us a son is given; and his name shall be called the mighty God, that is as Socinians inform us, he shall have an appellation to which every Jew is entitled. When Thomas beheld the wounds of his risen Saviour, he exclaimed, my Lord and my God! But if we wish to know what he meant by the term God, we may suppose that being convinced that Christ was a Jew, he gave him an appellation to which every Jew was entitled. For if Thomas was a Socinian he would not "*hesitate to apply the appellation God to Christ, in the sense in which he has shewn it is applicable to him, as one to whom the word of God came.*"

The word of God came to St. Paul, and therefore, if there was no reason to apply the term in question to Christ, but because the Word of God came to him, it might for the same reason have been applied to the Apostle. In some such way as the following, We are in him that is true, even in St. Paul, this is the true God and eternal life. Looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, even St. Paul. Of the tribe of Benjamin of whom, as concerning the flesh, St. Paul came; who is over all, God blessed for ever. In the beginning was St. Paul; and St. Paul was God; and was with God. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and not after St. Paul; for in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Would not a book written in this manner be justly regarded as a compound of folly and blasphemy? And such the scriptures are made to be by Socinian interpretations, when they assert that Christ is only called God, because he was one to whom the word of God came.

8. In reference to an article on the worship of Christ, Mr. C. proceeds, "*With respect to No.* 10, *the simple question is, whether the word worship, when used in reference to Christ, indisputably signifies religious adoration. The term has, in scripture, a primary and a subordinate signification. Now as the scriptures declare that the Father is the only true God, and affirm that the true worshippers must worship the Father alone, Unitarians naturally conclude that they are absolutely forbidden to pay religious worship to any other being besides God the Father, and that therefore the word worship, when applied to Christ, must be taken in its subordinate signification.*" Unitarians are certainly right in supposing that they are absolutely forbidden to worship any other being than God the Father; providing the scriptures affirm what they are here said to do, namely, "*that the true worshippers must worship the Father alone.*" But in what part of scripture is that affirmed? I believe such a thing was never heard of before. Worshipping the Father, and worshipping the Father alone, are so different in signification, that the one could not be put for the other, but with a design to corrupt the word of God. That the term "worship," in scripture, is not always used in the same sense, we grant. It is sometimes put for civil respect, and sometimes for religious homage. But if the worship given to Christ, in the scriptures, does not signify religious homage, it will be impossible for us to discover what constitutes religious homage. There are at least four different words in the New Testament, which are all rendered in our version by the term worship. But that which conveys the highest and most appropriate idea is that which is used in the first of Hebrews, where the apostle tells us all the angels are commanded to worship Christ. The word rendered worship, in this verse, is used twenty-four times in the New Testament, for the worship of the true God; it is the word used by our Saviour when he says, "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." In

this manner, men and angels are commanded to worship Chris
Wherefore has God highly exalted him, and given him a name abov
every name; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, o
things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth
and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory o
God the Father. It is well known, that bowing the knee is a phras
used in scripture for religious worship. I have left me, says Go
to Elijah, seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have no
bowed to Baal. St. Paul likewise says, I bow my knees to th
father of mercies. When he says, Every knee shall bow at th
name of Jesus, he alludes to Isaiah xlv. 23. where the Almight
says, I have sworn by myself, that unto me every knee shall bow
every tongue shall swear. So, when we confess that Jesus is Lord
and at the same time bow the knee, we render him the highes
worship which can be offered. When we pray for the things whic
concern our eternal salvation, we perform an act of religious ho
mage. And we are told, that the thief on the cross offered thi
prayer to Christ, Lord, remember me when thou comest into th
kingdom. This was acknowledging Christ to be Lord of the in
visible world. Whether he had done right or wrong in this act o
worship, might have remained doubtful; had not our Saviour shew
his approbation of it, by replying, To-day shalt thou be with m
in Paradise. Dying Stephen said, Lord Jesus, receive my spiri
and he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not th
sin unto their charge. Respecting this prayer of St. Stephen,
is to be observed, that he was at this time full of the Holy Ghos
and by this means secured from error. He did not pray for a tem
poral deliverance, such as a creature might be able to afford; b
for his eternal salvation; which was attributing to Christ that in
nite power, wisdom, and goodness which alone can bestow this sa
vation, The petition which Stephen put up for his enemies, a
tributed to our Saviour the power of forgiving or condemnin
these murderers. No higher act of worship was ever render
than this; nor was any act of worship ever performed on a mo
solemn occasion; nor by a person better qualified to worship arigh
nor with a more illustrious testimony of acceptance. Yet this a
of worship was performed to Christ. Stephen, at his death, wo
shipped Christ, in the same manner in which Christ, at his cruc
fixion, worshipped the Father.

In the first epistle to the Thessalonians, St. Paul prays in the fo
lowing manner. Now God himself, even our Father, and o
Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord mak
you to increase, and abound, in love one toward another, and towa
all men, even as we do toward you. This prayer is offered up
God the Father, and to our Lord Jesus Christ; in the same mann
and in the same terms; both being unitedly addressed in the sa
petition, without any distinction. When the apostle was under
fliction, he says, "Thrice I besought the Lord, that it might dep

from me. But he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities; that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Here the religious worship given to Christ is of the highest description, and this worship meets with the highest tokens of acceptance. St. John, in his second epistle says, Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. This is religious worship given to Christ, because the blessings mentioned are such as can only be granted by the true God. We give religious worship to Christ, when we baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and likewise when we pronounce the blessing on christian assemblies. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all: and for this practice we have the authority of scripture.

Divine worship includes thanksgiving and praise. In I Chron. xxix. 10, &c. we have the following address to the Almighty; Blessed be thou, LordGod of Israel our Father, for ever and ever. Thine O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in heaven, and in earth, is thine: thine is the kingdom, O Lord! and thou art exalted above all. Now therefore, our God! we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. A similar sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise is offered by the host of heaven, to both the Father and the Son, without any note of distinction. Rev. v. 11—14. The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and blessing. Every creature in heaven heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

The Apostles, and the whole primitive church, gave religious worship to Christ; they were termed, all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. That this was the universal practice of the church, is a fact confirmed both by scripture and history, by friends and by enemies. The heathens accused christians of addressing themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some God. Mahomet charged christians with idolatry, because they worshiped Christ; and on this he founded his pretensions to reform their religion, and bring them back to the worship of one God. The present Socinians prefer the same charge against christians, and attempt a similar reformation of religion. That christians worshiped Christ, was an incontestible fact, openly avowed by themselves, before the face of the world. Justin Martyr, who lived one hundred and fifty years after Christ, wrote in vindication of christians, to the Roman Emperor, in which he says, "The Pagans tax us with atheism; and if, by atheism, they mean a refusal of worshiping heathen deities, we own we are atheists; but if, by atheism, they mean a refusal of worshiping any God, we

disown the charge. The true God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, we worship and adore."

From what has been said, it appears that the scriptures authorize and command us to give religious worship to Christ. The worship given to Christ is either true religious homage, or otherwise, what constitutes religious homage, has never yet been discovered; and there are no true worshippers of God in the world. But the present Socinians say, Christ ought not to be worshiped, because he is only a man. And if Christ be only a man, they reason justly and conclusively; no man on earth, nor angel in heaven, is to receive religious worship; this belongs to God alone. Let them prove that Christ was only a man, and their work is done. This they must do, before they can disprove the doctrine of the Trinity; and this will do it effectually. When they prove that Christ was only a man, they will not only prove the doctrine of the Trinity untrue, but, likewise, that the christian church, from the commencement, has been guilty of idolatry; that idolatry is practised in heaven, and that the scriptures authorize idolatry; consequently, the scriptures are not to be received. But the rejection of the scriptures is to follow the proof of Christ being only a man, not to go before it; and so long as we are permitted to keep the scriptures, we may reason in the following manner. The scriptures declare that God alone is to be worshiped; at the same time, they authorize the worship of Christ; therefore Christ is God. And those who admit Christ to be the true God, will not deny the doctrine of the Trinity. Hence the whole controversy between us and the Socinians depends upon the divinity of Christ. Accordingly, in my former answer to Mr. C., I have shewn that the scriptures declare Christ to be God, the creator of the world, and the object of our worship; yet in the whole array of passages produced, Mr. C. says there is nothing, even in appearance, which "*stands opposed to the fundamental tenets of Unitarianism.*" By such a groundless and incredible assertion, he can injure no cause but his own, nor scandalize any person but himself. In contrasting Socinian sentiments with our own, I have stated, that they believe that Christ was only a man, that he did not create the world, and is not to be worshiped. Respecting this statement, Mr. C. says, "*I am really at a loss to conceive how Mr. S. could hope to render any service to his cause, by placing in the right-hand column, sentences so totally foreign to the purpose. Will he affirm, that those sentences form the Unitarian creed? He knows full well that they do not.*" The very opposite to what is here asserted, I apprehend, will be found to be the real truth. Nothing is there stated as a Socinian sentiment, which they have not avowed to the world as their belief. If any article of faith had been attributed to them which they do not maintain, can it be supposed that Mr. C. would have passed it over in silence? If he only means, that what has been stated is not the whole of their creed, the point will be admitted. For some articles of faith are the same among all

:ts and persuasions, which have no need to be mentioned, when
: design is to shew, how far the opinions of any particular sect
: erroneous. What was there stated, was never intended, nor
uld any person have imagined it to be intended, as a view of their
ole creed. What was stated, was the creed of Socinians, as far
it went, and it went far enough to shew that their tenets contra-
:t the scriptures, in some of the most important articles of the
ristian faith. It would be difficult to give the whole creed of the
:inians, because they frequently labour to conceal their real sen-
nents, that they may give their system an air of imposing plausi-
lity.

"It must be carefully observed," says Mosheim, Vol. iv. p. 321, that the catechism of Racow, which most people look upon as the eat standard of Socinianism, and as an accurate summary of the :trine of that sect, is in reality, no more than a collection of the pular tenets of the Socinians, and by no means a just representa-n of the secret opinions and sentiments of their doctors. The itings, therefore, of these learned men, must be perused with at-ntion, in order to our knowing the hidden reasons and true prin-ples from whence the doctrines of the catechism are derived. It observable, besides, that, in this catechism, many Socinian tenets d institutions, which might have contributed too much to render e sect still more odious, and to expose its internal constitution too uch to public view, are omitted; so that it seems to have been ss composed for the use of the Socinians themselves, than to im-se upon strangers, and to mitigate the indignation which the te-ts of this community had excited in the minds of many. Hence never obtained, among the Socinians, the authority of a public nfession or rule of faith; and hence the doctors of that sect were thorized to correct and contradict it, or to substitute another form doctrine in its place."

If we speak of Unitarians in general, it is still more difficult to give eir whole creed, because their opinions are so various. What some them maintain, others reject. Some of them believe that Christ sisted before he came into the world; others reject this opinion. ome believe that he possessed a superangelic nature; others, that e was only a mere man. Some maintain that he created the orld; others, that he did not create any thing, in heaven or in rth. Some believe in his miraculous conception; others declare im to have been in reality the son of Joseph. Some believe that e made an atonement for sin; others discard this doctrine. Some elieve that Christ is entitled to religious worship; others pronounce ch worship to be idolatry. Some allow the personality of the oly Spirit; others understand by the Spirit, either some divine tribute, or the Father himself. Some preach the free agency of an; others maintain that the world is governed by philosophical ecessity. Some believe that man has a soul, which will exist in a ate of separation from the body; others reject this opinion. Some

receive the whole of the four gospels; others reject a chapter or tw in the beginning of Matthew, and in the beginning of Luke. Som believe in the existence of the devil; but others reject this opinion They differ likewise in their opinions respecting the future punish ment of the wicked. But as it happened with the Jews and Gentiles however much they were at variance among themselves, they coul agree together in persecuting the christians; so all Unitarians agre in degrading the Saviour of the world from the dignity of his God head. And it is only needful to state so much of their creed a bears upon the point in dispute. It is the less requisite to give thei whole creed, as they are so much given to change, from the highes point of Arianism, to the lowest degree of Socinianism. Dr. Priest ley says, that after he left the Calvinists, he was a "high Arian next a low Arian; then a Socinian; and, in a little time, a Socinia of the lowest kind, in which Jesus Christ is considered as a mer man, the son of Joseph and Mary, and naturally as fallible and pec cable as Moses, or any other prophet." He also says, "He doe not know when his creed will be fixed." The creed of many fixe in open infidelity.

9. "*It is truly curious*" says my opponent "*to observe the per plexity in which Mr. S. involves himself. First, he endeavours t persuade us, that doctrines inferred from Scripture are preferable t those expressed in the very words of scripture. Then he jumbles to gether a number of scriptural sentences, which have no more to do i proving the Trinity than they have in establishing the Newtonia Philosophy*" For all this, the reader is required to take Mr. C.' word; of these assertions he gives no proof whatever. The scrip ture sentences alluded to, are such as relate to the Godhead of Christ a point of so much importance in the controversy, that, without it the doctrine of the Trinity cannot stand, and with it, cannot be over thrown. Yet Mr. C. is so far from having any regard to even th appearance of truth, as to assert, that these sentences have no mor to do in proving the Trinity, than they have in establishing th Newtonian Philosophy. This he calls refutation, and commence by telling us what should be abandoned and renounced, by all fai disputants and honest searchers after truth, He might have said with equal truth, that I had openly and avowedly renounced th bible, as that I have laboured to persuade any one, that doctrine inferred are preferable to those which are expressed in the languag of scripture.

But I have said, and still say, that in many instances the word of scripture may be quoted, when the sense of it is perverted, likewise affirm, that doctrines fairly inferred from the word of Go are no more to be rejected, than those which are clearly expressed When inference does not conradict, but reconciles and elucidate what is in various places expressed, it becomes a powerful auxiliary in the defence of truth. A reasoning power was given to man fo the purpose of being employed, not as a talent to be hid in the earth

and the proper employment of reason is not to oppose divine revelation but to discover its truths, and explore its hidden treasures. The will of God is to be obeyed in whatever way it is made known, and all his truths are to be received by whatever means we arrive at their discovery. And in all ages the Almighty has left some important truths to be searched into and established by fair inference.

What was needful to be known of God was manifested to the Gentiles, by the things which are made; even his eternal power and Godhead. But this manifestation was to be discovered by inference. Their own reason, when they made a right use of it, taught them that the world must have had a Creator, and that its Creator must be infinitely powerful, wise, and good; and the most suitable object of their adoration, thanksgiving, and praise. The Patriarchs, as the apostle informs us, lived in expectation of future felicity; but that important doctrine by which they were supported during their pilgrimage, was established by inference only, and not by any express declaration. By the various types and figures of the law, the gospel was in some measure preached unto the Jews, but the truths thus inculcated were established by inference. Where the will of God is clearly expressed, there is often some additional circumstance as clearly implied. As where it is said, thou shalt have no other gods before me; it is clearly implied that we are to have the Lord for our God. When it is said the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; it clearly implies that this secret is concealed from them who fear him not. Both Christ and his apostles established the truth by inference, and have in this respect set us an example, that we should follow their steps. In disputes, where express declarations will not avail, the force of inference may gain the conquest, as in the defence of the Christian religion. The truth of this religion is expressly declared, but these express declarations have no weight with unbelievers: in contending with them, we have therefore, to take another course. From the circumstances of the case, we shew, that respecting the facts of the gospel the apostles could not be deceived themselves, and likewise that they could have no motive to deceive others: that good men could not have been guilty of so much falsehood and fraud as they must have practised, if their story was not true, nor could bad men have supported uniformly, and perseveringly, and at the hazard of their lives, the cause of virtue and holiness. From a variety or circumstances we conclude that miracles were wrought by the apostles and other primitive Christians; and these we conclude are a sufficient confirmation of the doctrines which they taught. But whenever we are denied the use of inference: we must leave the field to infidels. Those who will receive no truths supported by inference must, of necessity, reject the Christian religion, and every other religion in the world. We have therefore every rational and lawful claim to the use of inference in proving the doctrine of the Trinity. In disputing with

such as call themselves Christians, we take the truth of the Scriptures for granted, and in these scriptures we are expressly informed, that there is one God and one only: but in the same scriptures, it is expressly declared, that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Ghost is God; and to each of these three is ascribed whatever exclusively belongs to the Deity, from these premises we infer that there is in the Godhead a trinity in unity. This is not setting up inference in opposition to any express declaration, it is an inference which embraces all the various declarations which the scriptures have made on the subject, and reconciles them one with another. Thus we do not, like our opponents, build up the reputation of one doctrine on the ruins of others, but we place them altogether in the temple of truth, where they unite in complete harmony and shine in full splendor.

Now as we can by the use of inference prove the doctrine contended for, to the satisfaction of all who love the whole truth, we see the reason why Mr. C. is so much averse to this expedient, when the present subject is under discussion. On his own side of the question he claims the right to this mode of investigation, and we object not to its use, but only to its abuse. It is abused when employed not to reconcile, but contradict the scriptures. Socinians tell us that Christ did not create the world, that he had no existence before he appeared in our nature, that he is not to be worshiped. These sentiments can only be supported by inference, and by inference drawn from a partial view of divine truth, and in direct opposition to a great part of the scriptures, yet they are repeatedly making the vain and groundless boast, of being able to express their sentiments in the language of scripture. The truth of their declaration may be disputed altogether, but at present we admit it as a fact: yet before it can be known what degree of credibility is to be awarded to their system on this ground, it will have to be enquired, whether they speak of the whole of their sentiments, or of a part only. If they speak of a part only, what they affirm is equally true of all sects and persuasions. In the next place, it will have to be enquired, whether they give a true, or a perverted sense, to those scriptures by which they pretend to express their sentiments; for a man of violence and blood can plead, "I came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword:" Allowing them to give a true sense to those scriptures, it will still have to be inquired, whether their system embraces the whole, or only a part, of divine revelation; because such as only hold a part, may be better able to express their sentiments in the language of scripture, than those who maintain the whole of divine truth. The Saducees believed that there was no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; but with regard to that part of divine revelation, which they did believe, they were able to express their sentiments in the language of scripture, which the other Jews could not so clearly do, who maintained the resurrection of the body, and the

immortality of the soul; at least, if their opponents confined them, as is supposed, to the five books of Moses. With regard to expressing sentiments in the language of scripture, half infidels will always seem, to superficial observers, to have the advantage over true believers. But we dispute the truth of their declaration altogether. In disputation, when we say, our sentiments and yours, our language, by no propriety of construction, can be allowed to refer to any sentiments, but those in which one party differs from the other. But no sentiments of this description, are they able to express in the language of scripture. They tell us, indeed, that there is one God, and that Christ was a man; but these are our sentiments, as well as their own. And we have no objection to their expressing these sentiments as they please, on any proper occasion; but they have nothing to do in the dispute between us. They have, therefore no reason to boast of expressing their sentiments in the language of scripture; because it is not true; and if true, would be of no weight in the balance of the controversy.

10. When Socinians declare that they can express their sentiments in the language of scripture, it seems reasonable to ask them, How they prove, in this manner, that Christ was only a man. "*But this,*" says Mr. C., "*is much the same thing, as if one should assert, that as Moses is stiled god, and as there is no such an expression in his history as, Moses was only a man, therefore it cannot be proved that Moses was only a man.*" This, I think, is not much the same, but very much different. Because the scripture does not speak in the same manner of Moses, in which it does of Christ. What should we think of the scriptures, if they had spoken of Moses in the following manner? The goings forth of Moses have been from of old, from everlasting. He had a glory with the father, before the world was. Moses was in the beginning with God; and Moses was God: he was made flesh and dwelt among us. He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Though he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man. By him were all things made, that are in heaven and in earth, and by him all things consist. To Moses it is said, Thy throne, O God, is for ever. Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. Moses has redeemed us to God, by his own precious blood. He is gone to prepare mansions for his people, in heaven; he will give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; he will raise them up at the last day. In Moses, dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead. He was the brightness of God's glory, and the very express image of his person It is the will of God, that all men should honour Moses, as they would honour their Creator. Blessing and

honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto Moses for ever and ever. Had the scriptures spoken in this manner of Moses, we should have had a right to demand, from those who denied his divinity, a proof that he was no more than a man; and if such proof could be brought, it would follow by inevitable consequence, that the scriptures are not true.

But the prophets and apostles speak in this manner of Jesus Christ, and so far as Socinians convince mankind, that the subject of these descriptions was a mere man, so far they expose these writers to ineffable contempt, and take a more effectual method to demolish the Christian system, than if they assailed the whole fabric at once. Socinianism is a back door, which would give an entrance to infidelity, if every other avenue was sufficiently guarded and secure. To how much infidelity it has given birth, it is neither easy nor needful to ascertain.

"According to M. Gregoire, infidelity was imported into France from England, by the author of a poem upon natural religion; before which time, very few French works could be found, in which the fundamental truths of christianity were attacked. This statement may be left, without examining its accuracy, for the present. It is certain, however, that the first attempt to establish a deistical form of worship was made in London, during the American war, by David Williams, a person well known in his day. He had been a minister of a dissenting congregation, in Liverpool, and, in the early days of Unitarianism, endeavoured to introduce an Unitarian liturgy there; but not stopping long at the half-way-house himself, he is said to have concerted, with Franklin, a plan for the propagation of deism; and, in 1776, he published a liturgy on the universal principles of religion and morality. The liturgy is purely a thankgsgiving service. Directions, indeed, are given, where the lessons and the general confession, and the litany, are to be read; but the latter, at least, must have undergone some radical retrenchments, before it could suit the description of persons, for whose accommodation the new service was designed. Some hymns, from Paradise Lost, and Thomson's Seasons, and a collection of psalms, are added. The intention being anti-christian, Voltaire, and the King of Prussia, encouraged him in it; and he obtained subscriptions enough to open a chapel, in Margaret Street, where he officiated, calling himself the Priest of Nature. The scheme lasted four years, and by that time, friends, congregation, and Priest of Nature, were alike wanting. The latter could not attend, on account of his health, and his other avocations; nor did he chuse to discharge the expences incurred for a society which he served gratuitously. As for the congregation, David Williams himself told M. Gregoire, that a great number of them went on gradullay to atheism, and then, of course, quitted the society." Had David Williams commenced with atheism, he would not have been so successful. Those who would do every thing at once, do nothing; while those who proceed gradually,

complish their object. A strong fortress must be approached by gular gradations; and those who would attack religion, should gin with Unitarianism, then proceed to Deism, and, lastly, to theism. Some, who begin in this manner, may not intend to go ıy further; but, when once the mound is broken down, they can-ot arrest the progress of the flood. A short time ago, in a popu-us town, at no great distance from Bolton, in Lancashire, a Soci-an minister opened a place of worship, and among his supporters, ıere were a number of professed Deists; and, when they were sked, why they supported a man who professed a religion which ıey had entirely renounced, they replied, that, though his opinion iffered from theirs, it came the nearest to it, of any they knew. 'his was the truth, but not the whole truth; for it was likewise the ıost effectual method they could have taken to propagate their ıeir own system.

11. We have not yet done with Mr. C., who tells us, that "*Uni-ırians adduce thousands of passages from the Bible, in which the Deity is spoken of as one individual being. In like manner, they dduce thousands of passages, which denominate Jesus Christ a man, nd those which speak of him as one of the human race, like unto his rethren, which they take in the common acceptation of the terms.*" o much diligence would be commendable, provided it answered ny useful purpose; but when they give themselves so much trou-le to prove, in the end, what no person disputed in the beginning, ıey have nothing to expect but labour, for their pains. "*For I. S.*" says my opponent, "*to assert, that the terms Jesus, Christ, he Son, when used in reference to our Lord, are ambiguous; some-imes meaning a man, sometimes the second person in the Trinity, nd at others, a God-man, &c.*" I have never asserted, that these erms, when applied to Christ, are ambiguous. So far from it, I elieve there is always some circumstance connected with these erms, by which their meaning may be clearly understood. But ith respect to what the scriptures teach, concerning Christ, there s no possibility of reconciling one passage with another; unless we nderstand some passages to relate to his human nature, some to is divine nature, and others to his mediatorial office, in which both ıatures are united. This is a mode of speaking, which the scrip-ures adopt on other occasions. Man, for instance, is possessed of ıoth body and soul; but the scriptures speak of him, sometimes in elation to the body only; as, where it is said, Dust thou art, and ınto dust shalt thou return. At other times, they speak only in elation to the soul. Lazarus was carried by angels into Abraham's ıosom. But, in general, they speak in relation to both body and oul. And in these diversified ways of speaking, there is no ambi-;uity,—the meaning is distinctly understood. Some have contended, hat man has no body, and others, that he has no soul, and both ıave supported their opinions by passages of scripture; but those vho would reconcile whatever the scriptures have declared on the

subject, must come to the conclusion, that man possesses both bo
dy and soul. So, with respect to Christ, some have denied his hu
manity, others his divinity, and both have quoted scripture in sup
port of their opinions, but in such a manner, as to make one passag
contradict another. The only way to reconcile all the passages
relative to Christ, is to conceive, that some speak of his human na
ture, others, of his divine nature, whilst others have reference t
both natures, united in one Mediator. By this means, we give th
full signification to every single passage, and, at the same time
preserve the consistency and harmony of the whole. Christ, in hi
human nature, was David's son; in his divine nature, he was Da
vid's Lord. In his human nature, he could do nothing of himself
in his divine nature, he could uphold all things, by the power of hi
word; he could raise himself from the dead; and, whatever the Fa
ther doeth, that doeth the Son likewise. In his human nature, h
ascended to his God and our God; in his divine nature, he was i
the beginning with God, and was God. In his human nature, h
was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, an
grew in wisdom and in stature; in his divine nature, he is the sam
yesterday, to-day, and forever; all things were made by him, an
for him, and without him was not anything made that was made
The Holy Ghost, who had no human nature, is never said to be in
ferior to the Father; but Christ, who possessed human nature
could speak of himself, in that capacity, and say, The Father i
greater than I. Yet, before he possessed human nature, he wa
in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with Goo
Sometimes, the scriptures speak in reference to both natures, unite
in one Mediator; as, where it is said, Feed the church of Goo
which he hath purchased with his blood. As man, without an unio
with the divine nature, he could not purchase the church with his ow
blood; as God, without an union with human nature, he could no
bleed and die. What is here spoken, must therefore relate to the re
union of both natures. In Zech. xii. 4. we are informed, that Je
hovah was to be pierced; and St. John declares this scripture i
fulfilled in Christ. But Jehovah could not be pierced, unless h
first took upon him human nature; and unless Christ was Jehovah
that prediction could not be accomplished in him. In this way, ever
passage which speaks of Christ may be reconciled, one with another
After all, it is much easier to make one passage contradict another

12. Proceeding, in my last, upon the principle, that a finite crea
ture cannot possess independent and infinite perfections, I happene
to observe, that, in a creature, there had not been room to contai
all the fulness of the Godhead. To which Mr. C., with his usua
shrewdness and promptitude, replies, "*Well, suppose these objec
tions valid; Unitarians are not accountable for the errors to whic
they apply. To urge them against Unitarians, is useless. Let the
be directed against the authors of them, Paul and Christ. Tell th
former, that he egregiously blunders, and does not know what he says*

hen he affirms, that in Christ dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead ; emind the latter, that he cannot mean what he says, when he says, I an, of mine own self, do nothing." Before we pursue the plan here ecommended, let us see if there is not a more excellent way. We night, indeed, adopt the proposed plan, under the sanction of authority ; for Socinians have boldly asserted, that Paul egregiously blunders, and that Christ was fallible and peccable ; and a readier way to escape from pressing difficulties, was never devised. Yet, we do not feel inclined to follow their example ; because, though we might have the convenience, they would have the honour, as being the original inventors of this expeditious and infallible mode of interpretation. Another reason for not following the proposed plan is, that we see no necessity for its adoption. We have proved, in the preceding paragraph, that the scriptures sometimes speak of Christ's humanity, and sometimes of his divinity ; let this be understood in the case before us, and every difficulty vanishes ; we shall then see, that Christ, as to his human nature, could do nothing of himself; but, as to his divine nature, he possessed all the fulness of the Godhead. Thus understood, there appears no opposition between St. Paul and Jesus Christ ; nor anything in what either of them advances, which contradicts any part of our own system, or any passage of scripture. The difficulties originate with those who consider Christ as a mere man ; and we are not disposed to blame either Christ or St. Paul, for the egregious blunders made by Socinians. Let every one bear his own burthen. The path we pursue may be more rugged than that proposed ; but we think the way of truth the safest in the end ; for we have been informed, that he who goeth out of the way of understanding, shall abide in the congregation of the dead.

Another piece of advice follows from Mr. C., from which I shall probably derive no advantage. He says, "*After Mr. S. has exhausted his own ingenuity, he calls in the assistance of some sage commentator, to help him. I would just whisper in Mr. S.'s ear, that if he be in the habit of receiving the supernatural assistance of the spirit, when pinched with a text of scripture, it would have been infinitely better had he procured such assistance here.*" Before I follow this advice, I should wish to be informed, whether those who believe in the assistance of the spirit, expect it to supersede human endeavours. If not, if the assistance of the spirit is not to encourage indolence, but industry, I shall still labour to acquire useful information, from every accessible source; and, in this way, I shall be more likely to obtain the assistance of the spirit. A man who has a faithful guide, is not to put out his own eyes. Mr C. is so far from seeking the assistance of the spirit, that he deems it a fit subject of jest and ridicule ; by this he makes it appear, however destitute he is of the Spirit of God, he possesses a full measure of the spirit of Socinianism.

Mr. C.'s ingenuity is so far from being exhausted, that he has the

art of turning the blunders or wilful mistakes which he makes, to his own advantage. He produces the following as a quotation from me. "When it is objected to us, all power is given to Jesus, therefore he is God, we reply, All power is given to Jesus, therefore he is God." This he pronounces, "*a piece of the strangest logic that the wildest fancy could conceive;*" which is certainly the case, as it here stands, for both the objection and the reply are the same thing; but the passage was quite otherwise before it fell into his hands, by this management, he is seen to speak the truth, when he declares it the strangest piece of logic, that the wildest fancy could conceive. And this declaration would have had no appearance of truth, if he had stated the words correctly, which he professed to quote. The same advantage he has obtained by two false quotations before. They may all be errors of the press; but it is common for other authors to suffer by such errors; but Mr. C. never appears to so much advantage, as when such blunders occur: they make him speak the truth; when nothing was further from his thoughts.

13. If Mr. C. had not been fond of contention, what could have induced him to dispute so long against a system which he could at any time utterly overthrow by a few words? and in a manner which his antagonists were no more likely to expect, than to resist. It has generally been supposed, that the Trinitarian system could not be overthrown without taking from Christ his divine perfections. But Mr. C. has found out a method of accomplishing this object, by giving to Christ all power in heaven and in earth, and every thing else of a divine nature which the scriptures declare him to possess. "*Jesus and his apostles*, says Mr. C., *frequently speak of the things possessed by Christ, being given to him. By this must be meant, either the humanity of Christ or his deity. To interpret such expressions, to signify that all power was given to the supposed deity of Christ, is to create an absolute self-evident contradiction. Then it must have been the man Christ, who was born, and lived, and died in Judea, to whom was given all that power and authority of which the scripture speaks. But this conclusion is fatal to Trinitarianism.* After this *fatal* blow has been struck, it is to be hoped he will desist from further violence, as that could only discover wanton cruelty. But how is the gift of all divine perfections to a man, to be understood? Divine perfections contain whatever can be supposed to constitute the Supreme Being, therefore must not a person receiving such perfection become the Supreme Being? Can that very human being who was born, and lived, and died in Judea, be made eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, immutable, and all perfect? can a finite being become infinite? If the Deity be supposed to give away his own perfections, what, in the meantime, becomes of his own Godhead? "If the divine perfections can be divided between the Father and the Son, then they are divine perfections no longer; because the line of division describes a boundary, and a boundary is incon-

stent with infinitude. Then, neither of them has infinite perfections. ocinians thus rob both the Father and the Son! If they suppose, at divine perfections are not diminished by division, and that the ather gives to the human nature of Jesus Christ, his own perfec- ons, and yet retains them; then, they make two Gods instead of ie." Thus, when Unitarians steer clear of one rock, they split on another. They avoid the self-contradiction of giving the di- ne perfections to the deity of Christ; but, by giving divine perfec- ons to a mere man, they create many self-contradictions. To avoid ll these contradictions, we should take the scriptures for our guide, hich, as we have before proved, sometimes speak of Christ's human ature, sometimes of his divine nature, and sometimes of his official mediatorial capacity. A son, who possesses natural powers, qual to his Father, may have an office, in which he is inferior to s father, and in which he is his father's subject. Christ, as a an, could not receive infinite perfections; as God, he could not ange; but, in his official capacity, as Mediator between God and an, he could be humbled and exalted,—he could be rich, and after- ards become poor; that we, through his poverty, might be rich; he uld be in the form of God, and then take upon him the form of a rvant; he could receive all that power, authority, and glory, hich the scriptures declare were given unto him; and, therefore, Ir. C.'s fatal conclusion proves fatal only to his own cause.

14. To follow up the last fatal blow, my opponent proceeds as llows. "*Another sophism, adopted by Mr. S., is, that in the scriptures, e find express mention of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. ach of these is called God, and has the highest titles which can be given the Deity. Each of these is said to be Eternal, Almighty, and Un- angeable,—to have made, preserved, and redeemed the world. Each of ese received the highest worship, adoration, thanksgiving, and praise. he only rational conclusion we can come to is, that of three persons and e God. A simple denial of these postulates is sufficient to annihilate e conclusion. It is unnecessary to disprove that Christ is called God the highest sense, that he is Eternal, Almighty, Unchangeable, and re- ives the highest titles and worship, that can be given to Deity; because Ir. S. has not adduced either the argument or scripture, which is neces- ry to establish these positions.*" Instead of making it appear that I ave not proved these positions, Mr. C. chooses to rest the whole of e important subject upon the credit of his bare word. But the ord of a credible person, relating to opinion, would not be taken controversy; if anything be done in this department, it must be y the dint of argument, and the force of evidence. Mr. C. seems allow, that if the positions, relating to the divinity of Christ, were roved, the doctrine of the Trinity would be established; and this ill be found to be the case, whether he allow it or not. We shall roceed, therefore, to prove these positions, as far as our limits will ermit.

Respecting the titles which are given to our Saviour, in scripture,

it has already been observed, that he is called the true God, the great God, and the mighty God. He is likewise called, the Lord from heaven, 1 Cor. xv. 37; the Lord of all, Acts x. 36; the Lord over all, Rom. x. 12; the Lord both of the dead and living, Rom. xiv. 9; the Lord of glory, Rev. xvii. 14. The Psalmist says, The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place; thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. This passage is applied to Christ, Eph. iv. 8. The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand. This is another passage from the Psalms, which our Saviour applies to himself, Matt. xxii. 44. In Psal. lxxxii. 18. we read, That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth. But this name, Jehovah, is frequently applied to Christ, Sanctify, says the prophet, Jehovah of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear; and let him be your dread; and he shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. This passage is applied to Christ. 1 Pet. ii. 8. The same prophet says, I saw Jehovah sitting upon a throne, and his train filled the Temple: above it stood the Seraphim; and one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory. This is applied to Christ, John xii. 41. 42. If the apostle's testimony is to be received, Christ is that Jehovah, whose glory the prophet saw, before whom the angels veil their faces, and give him the highest degree of religious worship. In the same prophet mentioned before, we read, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of Jehovah. This is applied to Christ, Matt. iii. 3. In Psalm xcvii. there is a command for the gods or angels to worship Jehovah; which the apostle, in Heb. i. applied to Christ. But, surely, the apostle could not write so contrary to all sense and reason, as to declare, that a command to worship Jehovah, is a command to worship Christ, unless he supposed Christ and Jehovah to be the same God. In the Old Testament, we frequently read of the angel of the Lord; in the original, it is, the angel Jehovah; one of these persons only we shall mention, at present. Exod. iii. 2—6. The angel Jehovah appeared unto Moses, in a flame of fire, and said unto him, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. The word angel signifies a person sent, and, of course, implies a person sending. The person sent cannot be God the Father, but must be understood of the angel of the covenant, God the Son. Therefore, Christ is the Jehovah mentioned in this passage, who styles himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. In Isaiah, we read, Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God. This title is claimed by Christ, who says, I am Alpha and

)mega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Rev. xii. 13. He is called, The Lord which is, and which was, nd which is to come, the Almighty, Rev. i. 8. On this passage, Origen says, "Now that you may know the omnipotence f the Father and the Son to be one and the same, as He is ne and the same God, and Lord with the Father; hear what it. John had said in the Revelation.—These things saith the ord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. For who is the Almighty that is to come, but Christ?" Ve see, therefore, that the highest titles are given to Christ, y which it is possible for deity to be described.

The Godhead of Christ may be proved by his perfections. Eterity neither is nor can be made the property of any creature, but he scripture declares Christ to be in possession of this incommuniable attribute. He was before all things. Col. i. 17. He was rom everlasting, or, as the word signifies, from the days of eternity, fic. v. 2. He is the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, hich is, and which was, and which is to come, Rev. i. 8. When he name of the divine Being was made known to the Jewish nation, God said unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, *I AM* hath sent me unto you, Exod. 3. 14. This title our Saviour ssumed, when he said to the Jews, before Abraham was *I AM*. He id not say before Abraham was, I was, but *I AM*. This appellaion is of the same import as Jehovah: it signifies an existence without either beginning or end. The scriptures evidently ascribe omipotence to Christ, for he is styled the mighty God, the Almighty, nd it is declared, that without him was not any thing made which vas made: and that he upholdeth all things by the word of his powr. Omniscience is likewise ascribed to Christ. It is said of the pirit, that it searches all things, even the deep things of God. The ame, for substance, is affirmed of Christ; As the father knoweth he, even so know I the Father, John, x. 15. Solomon addressing imself to God, says, For thou, even thou only knowest the hearts f all the children of men, 1 Kings, viii. 39. The same infinite nowledge is applied to Christ, Rev. ii. 23. When he comes to udgment, he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and nake known the councils of the heart. 1. Cor. iv. 5. And he who an make known the councils of men's hearts, at the great day of ccounts, must know all things, in the highest sense of the expresion. He is also declared to be omnipresent. When in earth, he vas in heaven, John iii. 13. Where two or three, he says, are gahered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. So, I m with you always, even to the end of the world. This is understood by Socinians to denote Christ's bodily presence, which was to emain with the apostles to the end of that age.* But this

* See 'Rev. John Pye Smith's Letters to Belsham.'

contradicts the scriptures which declare that Christ was to go to the Father, so as to be no more in the world. The heavens must receive him till the restitution of all things. Besides, his bodily presence could only be at one place at the same time: and the apostles were scattered abroad through distant regions of the earth. When Paul was at Rome, Peter was, probably, at Babylon, and James at Jerusalem: and however quickly he might be supposed to move from one place to another, he could not be with one of the apostles, without leaving the other eleven destitute of his presence. What encouragement could the promise of Christ's bodily presence afford the apostles, since he remained invisible, and they could have no intercourse with him? The gentiles, in the darkest ages, were able to feel after God: but if the apostles had groped to the end of their lives, they would never have been able to find the bodily presence of their master. That this promise alluded to his bodily presence, was never known, till the close of the eighteenth century. The old Socinians did not understand it;—this great mystery was left to be explored by modern Unitarians. It seems, therefore, that to encourage his disciples, Christ made them a promise, which was not understood till the present age, and when it comes to be understood, amounts to nothing. And this is called rational divinity and defensible christianity.

But all these absurdities are avoided, when the Godhead of Christ is admitted; then we see how he could be with his people to the end of the world, and give them grace according to their day. Christ was possessed of every divine perfection, as he affirms himself, when he says, Whatever the Father hath are mine: and of these perfections he will always be possessed, for he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. If we notice the works of Christ, we shall find them no less marvellous to us than his perfections. The Psalmist, addressing the Almighty, says, Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea, all they shall wax old as doeth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall hall have no end, Psal. cii. 24—27. This the apostle applies to Christ, Heb. i. 10. When the creation of the heavens and the earth is ascribed to Jehovah, it is added, And thou preservest them all, Neh. ix. 6. But, in the New Testament, we are informed, that Christ upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and by him all things consist. We read, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people. But St. John tells us, that the heavenly host fell down before the Lamb, and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, Rev. v. 8, 9. Now, if God manifest himself by his works, as the apostle declares, then it will follow, that creation

ovidence, and redemption display the eternal power, and God-
ead of Christ. If the titles, attributes, works, and honours, as-
ibed to our Saviour, do not prove his real divinity, then it is
npossible to prove anything from scripture, if any person pleases
call it in question. And whatever proves the proper divinity
Christ, does, in effect, prove the doctrine of the Trinity; for
ese two doctrines, must, of necessity, stand or fall together.

15. Mr. C. seems strongly attached to the English translation,
far as he finds it favourable to his own cause. Both the version and
iginal are often made to fly before Unitarianism; but when any al-
ration is made which has an unfavourable aspect to his side of the
uestion, he reprobates it in the strongest terms, when he is not able
y any means to disprove the propriety of such an alteration. In
y first, I gave a quotation from a very learned author, namely, Dr.
orsley, who, instead of the phrase Angel of the Lord, would read
ehovah Angel. What induced that great man to transpose the
ords, I know not, but wherever I have turned to the original, it
written, the angel Jehovah. The transposition, however, does not
ter the sense, and the only point in dispute here, is, whether we
ould read, the Angel of the Lord, or, the Angel Jehovah. Re-
ecting the latter, Mr. C. declares it is "*a fair specimen of the*
ethod by which the Bible is screwed and tortured into a Trini-
rian form, and made to speak the Trinitarian language." If the
ader did not know Mr. C.'s method of disputation, he might suppose
at he had at least some shadow of reason for what is here advanced;
ut if he was led to make such a supposition, he would be under a
istake. What Mr. C. calls screwing and torturing the bible, is as
teral a translation of the original, as can possibly be given of any
vo words in the scriptures. Mr. C. proceeds to say, "*Perhaps Mr.*
. may attribute my perseverance in error to my ignorance of the nice
istinctions in the cases of the Hebrew nouns." I shall dispute his
aving any knowledge of the original whatever, if he asserts there
anything in the words themselves, which indicates the genitive
ase. And certainly the translators should never add the sign of
at case, when the words make a proper sense without it; which
the case in the present instance. But our author tells us, on
is occasion, he "*would rather agree with King James's transla-*
rs." It will, however, be remarked, that these translators were
ot in so much repute with him, a little while ago. When the pas-
ge recording the prayer of Stephen was under consideration, we
ere reminded, that the word God was not in the original; and,
ough "*common sense and the tenor of the scripture*" required that
ord to be supplied, it must be dashed out, whatever people might
ink of King James's translators; but now, when they are found
have added a word which perverts the sense, the passage must
and as it is in their translation. On this subject, Mr. C. proceeds
say, "*Nor do I feel the less inclined to give the preference to the*
ading, Angel of the Lord, in our English Bibles, on account of
ing assured, that Jehovah and the Angel are two substantive nouns

in apposition. Grammarians inform me, that nouns are said to be in apposition, when one is added to another, by way of explanation. As King George. Here one noun explains the other. Did we say King only, it would not be known what particular king was meant, because there are more kings than one." All this will be granted; but it does not go to overthrow, but to confirm the reading for which we contend. For if we say, Angel only, or Messenger, as the word signifies, it is not known what messenger is meant: because there are many messengers, both celestial and terrestial: but when the latter noun, Jehovah, is added, it explains the meaning of the former. The person intended, and the office he sustains, are both understood, by reading, the Angel Jehovah. Mr. C contends, that the Angel of the Lord "*was evidently one of the heavenly host.*" To believe the angel to be the Deity, he terms a "gross absurdity." All this is easily said, by any random writer, who has no reputation to stake upon these bold assertions, and, therefore, fears no detection; though he can bring no proof of what is advanced, yet, if he can persuade any one to believe him, it is so much clear gain, obtained without hazard;—for nothing can be lost, where there is nothing to lose. The point now in dispute is, whether the Angel of the Lord, or, as it ought to be rendered, the Angel Jehovah, was a created angel, one of the heavenly host, or, that Divine Being, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, and was afterwards made flesh, and dwelt among us. Mr. C., who is of the former opinion, claims all the evidence on his own side of the question, and places all the absurdity on ours. Our business, then, is to inquire, whether there is not some evidence on our side, and some absurdity on the other. We cannot do this by overturning the arguments of our opponent, because he has not thought proper to advance any on the subject, but has left us to pursue our own course. Let us, therefore, bring into view a few of those passages, where the Angel Jehovah is mentioned. Abraham, at the divine command, prepared to offer his son in sacrifice; And the Angel Jehovah called unto him out of heaven, and said, Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me, Gen. xxii. 11, 12. From this it appears, that the God whom Abraham feared, and to whom he was about to offer his son, and the Angel who spoke from heaven, were one and the same person. Jacob wrestled with a man, and said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me; and when he prevailed, he was said to have power with God, and to have seen God face to face, Gen. xxxii. 24—30. This person that wrestled with Jacob, is called an Angel, and likewise Jehovah, Hosea xii. 3, 4, 5. He took his brother by the heel, and by his strength he had power with God; yea, he had power over the Angel and prevailed: he wept and made supplication unto him; he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even Jehovah God of Hosts. Gen. xlviii. 15, 16, Jacob blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk,

lie God who fed me my life long, unto this day. The Angel which re-eemed me from all evil, bless the lads. Respecting these passages ompared together, we have to ask, could the person who is styled ehovah God of Hosts, the God before whom Abraham and Isaac alked, who was Jacob's Redeemer, preserver, and the object of his orship, be no more than a created angel, or one of the heavenly ost? In Judges xiii. we read, that the Angel Jehovah appeared nto Manoah and his wife, and received from them a burnt-offering; nd when the flame went up toward heaven, from the altar, the An-el Jehovah ascended in the flame; and Manoah and his wife ooked on, and fell on their faces to the ground. And Manoah aid unto his wife, we shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his wife said unto him, if the Lord were pleased to kill us, he ould not have received a burnt offering at our hands. Could this e a created angel, whom these people called God, and worshiped ith a burnt offering? In Exod. iii. 2—6, we read, that the Angel ehovah appeared unto Moses, in a flame of fire, out of the midst of burning bush; and called unto him, and said, I am the God of braham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Would any reated angel speak in this manner? Infidels, in contempt of re-ealed religion, have asserted, that the God of the Hebrews was nly an angel. Voltaire says, the Jews worshiped angels. Nor can hese charges be refuted, if the Angel of the Lord, or the Angel ehovah, was only one of the heavenly host. But all these diffi-ulties and absurdities vanish, when we consider him as our Re-eemer, the second person in the holy Trinity; called Jehovah, as o his nature, and angel, in respect of his office. And it is to be re-emembered, that the apostle tells us expressly, that the Jews tempt-d Christ in the wilderness. Christ must, therefore, have been that ngel Jehovah, by whom they were conducted and protected, and hom they were required to love and to fear, to worship and obey.

16. Mr. C. grows more calm towards the close, and speaks in is best manner, which still is bad enough. "*I attach*," says he, *no value whatever to a mere belief of the Unitarian system. Let the Trinitarian remember, that he has no warrant from Scripture for believ-ng that he will gain admittance into heaven, on the ground of having be-ieved in the Trinity. It will not avail the Trinitarian, when standing at he bar of Christ, to remind the Judge, that he has maintained his deity; or will it prove detrimental to the Unitarian, that he has thought other-ways. The question, To what denomination did you belong? will not be ut.*" If there are any Trinitarians expecting admittance into hea-en, on the ground of opinion only, it was very proper for our au-hor to undeceive them; and if there are no such Trinitarians he s only beating the air; and in this way is much better employed, han when he is emptying the Christian Religion of all its distin-uishing excellencies. We grant that it will not avail the Trinita-ian, to tell the judge, that he has maintained his deity; but we annot admit, without proof, that it will not be detrimental to the Unitarian, to have thought otherways; and of this no proof is given, Our Saviour commanded the apostles to declare to the world, where-

ever the gospel was preached, that he that believeth not shall be damned. And if there be any truth in this declaration, there must be something to be believed respecting Christ; and it will be found detrimental to such as have not believed it. If salvation in any measure depend on our faith, we cannot be left to believe what we please, but must feel the effects of not believing what is revealed. The divinity of Christ is a doctrine which enters into every part of christianity, and gives life and strength to the whole system; those who do not believe it, can have no dependance upon his merits for their acceptance with God. But the scriptures declare there is salvation in no other. He is the foundation laid in Zion; disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. Through him, we have access to the Father, by the Spirit; and no man, says our Saviour, can come to the Father, but by me. Other foundation, we are told, can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. But after all the scriptures have said on the subject, Socinians either place no dependance on the merits of Christ, as the procuring cause of their salvation; or otherwise, according to their own principles, they are trusting in an arm of flesh; and in either case, they cannot be saved, unless the writers of scripture are found to be false witnesses, when they declare there is salvation in none but Christ, and pronounce a curse on all who trust in an arm of flesh.

It is true "*the question, to what denomination did you belong, will not be put,*" but the inference which may be drawn from it, and which appears intended to be drawn from it, is both false and dangerous in the highest degree: because it will serve any man for a plea, to whatever community he belongs, or whatever his opinions may happen to be. Some sects and persuasions have so corrupted the word of God, that they have been a disgrace to christianity; they have so far erred from the truth, as to bring in doctrines of devils; but to any person labouring to reclaim them they might have replied, "*The question, to what denomination did you belong, will not be put.*" The Jews believed in the humanity of Christ, but not in the Divinity; and had he made no pretensions to the latter, it does not appear that they would either have charged him with blasphemy, or have put him to death. For a good work, they said, we stone thee not, but because thou being a man makest thyself God. But notwithstanding this plausible vindication of their own conduct, they were ranked with unbelievers, and threatened with eternal destruction if they continued in unbelief. But to these threatnings they might have replied, "*The question to what denomination did you belong will not be put.*" The same reply might be made by both Turks and Heathens; and a plea that will equally suit all, can be of no advantage to any. Let no man therefore venture his salvation on such a spiders' web; which however finely and artificially wrought, is miserably thin and weak; we can easily see through it, and on the least pressure it will break asunder, and leave nothing behind but the dirty film of those bowels from which it was produced.

FINIS.

J. Blackwell, Printer, 48, High-Street, Sheffield.

THE

FINAL PERSEVERANCE

OF

SAINTS:

CONTAINING

A DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTIONS RELATING TO THIS IMPORTANT DOCTRINE;

AND

A Refutation

OF

THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF IT ADVANCED BY DR. DWIGHT,

And other celebrated Divines of the Calvinistic Persuasion.

BY ABRAHAM SCOTT.

"Placed for his trial on this bustling stage,
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age;
Free in his will to choose or to refuse,
Man may improve the crisis, or abuse;
Else, on the fatalist's unrighteous plan,
Say to what bar amenable were man?
With nought in charge he could betray no trust;
And if he fell would fall because he must;
If love reward him, or if vengeance strike,
His recompense in both unjust alike."

COWPER.

LONDON:

Sold by R. Baynes, and J. Kershaw; by J. Clarke, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Mort, Newcastle-under-Lyne; T Allbutt, Hanley; Sutton, Nottingham. Smart, Huddersfield; Cunningham, Ashton; Cullingworth, Leeds; Hartley, Rochdale: Walker, Halifax; Harrison, Barnsley; Roberts, Manchester, and J. Blackwell, Sheffield.

1825.

THE

FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS,*

&c. &c.

In our passage to an eternal world, it is both our duty and our privilege to exercise a firm confidence in a faithful Creator. But on one side of this confidence lies despair, and on the other presumption; and upon one or other of these fatal rocks, we believe many have been driven by the doctrine of Final Perseverance; which teaches the certain salvation of some, and the inevitable destruction of others; according to a decree which passed in heaven, before the world began; and which cannot be altered by any line of conduct which man can pursue. Those who have been taught this doctrine, and who are naturally of a timorous disposition, when they get out of their course, as they can find in themselves no evidence for heaven, conclude they belong to the class who must inevitably perish. In this distress, they lose the anchor of the soul, they make

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* It is not a writer's motives, but his performance, which is really interesting to his readers. A good book will retain all its usefulness though it was not produced by praiseworthy motives; and a bad one is not rendered less pernicious by the good intention of the writer. Yet, as there is often an anxiety to know an author's motives, it is proper to state them.

Some time ago, the doctrines which I preached and published, were attacked by a Calvinist Minister; and I was conscious that my tenets could be defended, only so far as his were refuted; and that none of the peculiarities of his system could be refuted, without overthrowing the whole of them. Accordingly I promised to write on all the points in dispute between us. And in pursuence of that engagement, I now send forth the present publication. My motive therefore for writing, is not an inclination to dispute, but a desire to promote the cause of truth, and to perform a needful act of selfdefence. At the same time it may be observed, that an inclination to dispute may proceed from a laudable motive, and may be productive of much good. St. Paul was a great disputant. All the Apostles disputed: and the brightest ornaments of the Church have followed their example.

shipwreck of faith, and sink to rise no more. On others this doctrine produces an opposite effect; but not less pernicious. Though they are profane and profligate, they depend on their past experience, when they were enlightened, when they tasted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God: and however far they are now fallen from grace, they presume they can never fall finally; and by this carnal confidence, they become so hardened in their crimes, as to render ineffectual all the means which Heaven employs for their recovery.

But the question which now lies before us for discussion, is, Whether the doctrine of Final Perseverance, as stated by Calvinists, be true or false: whether it be true that those who are once in grace can never fall finally, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit. If, upon examination, we find this doctrine to be true, we must take it with all its disadvantages; and if, by comparing it with the word of God, we find it to be false, it ought to be rejected, however good for food or pleasant to the eyes the fruit it bears may seem to be.

2. We might be lead to suppose, that those ministers who believe the doctrine in question to be true, would not feel much anxiety about its propagation. For if some are infallibly appointed to fall away from any religion they may at any time possess, and others are as infallibly appointed to obtain religion and persevere to the end, it is of very little consequence what articles of faith are either received or rejected. Providing this doctrine be true, no harm can result from the disbelief of it; but if it should prove to be false, the belief of it may cause many to perish for whom Christ died.

Some of the heathen philosophers have been blamed for representing God as taking no active part in the government of the world, which is ruled by fate and necessity, over which he himself has no controul, and in which neither the virtuous nor vicious actions of men can make any change, either for the better or the worse. Calvinistic speculations proceed by a different route, but come for substance to the same conclusion. According to their notions, the Almighty is not influenced in the government of the world, by either the actions or dispositions of mankind, but all the actions and dispositions of men are the necessary result of a decree which he made for his own glory, before the world began.

The English and Scotch divines tell us in their confession of faith, that "God from all eternity did unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, without any foresight of faith or good works." The Dutch divines speak to the same purpose, as follows: "In process of time, God bestowed faith on some, and not on others; this proceeds from his eternal decree,

according to which, he softens the hearts of the elect, and leaves them who are not elected in their wickedness and hardness. Election is the unchangeable decree of God, by which, before the foundation of the world, he hath chosen in Christ unto salvation, a set number of men. This Election is one and the same of all which are to be saved. Not all men are elected, but some not elected; whom God in his unchangeable good pleasure hath decreed to leave in the common misery, and not to bestow saving faith upon them; but leaving them in their own ways, at last to condemn and punish them everlastingly for their unbelief, and also for their other sins." The Protestants of France have expressed themselves as follows: "We believe, that out of the general corruption and condemnation in which all men are plunged, God draws those whom in his eternal and unchangeable counsel he has elected by his goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ, without considering their works, leaving others in the same corruption and condemnation."

By the above statements, it appears, that whether we are to be eternally saved or lost, depends exclusively on whether we are elected or not elected; and the decree of election passed without any respect to men's actions; and therefore men's actions have no influence on their eternal destiny. This decree, we are told, was passed for God's glory; by which we may see it is much easier to employ high sounding words, than to make them convey any sense or meaning. Unless God is more glorified by men's damnation than he is by their salvation, we cannot see how his glory was promoted by leaving the greatest part of mankind out of the decree of Election, without any reason whatever on the part of man. For if there was no reason for the choice of some, there could be no reason for the exclusion of others. The glory of God is always the same in itself; but he may be said to be glorified by whatever makes his glory manifest to intelligent creatures; but that glory cannot be manifested, when it can neither be seen nor understood; which is the case with respect to the difference the Almighty is supposed to make, without any reason, between one man and another, by the decree of Election. To affirm, therefore, that this was done for his glory, is to use words without meaning. By this decree, if any such has been made, the Almighty has put it out of his own power, and out of the power of any creature, whether good or bad, to make any change in the eternal destination of any individual of the human race. Whatever men may believe, or say, or do, their appointed salvation or damnation will infallibly take place. This opinion leaves us without any motive to seek the divine favour; because some have this favour infallibly secured to them, and others cannot attain it by any means. And whether we have any thing to thank our Creator for, remains to be proved when our destiny comes to be known. Yet men who are not ashamed to avow sentiments which shew human efforts to be useless, and which involve such impious and horrible conclusions, call their notions doctrines of grace, and discover the greatest solicitude to have them propagated. They shew as much solicitude as if one of the elect could be lost, or one of the non-elect saved.

With respect to perseverance, they endeavour to prove by a long train of subtle arguments, that it is determined from eternity respecting every individual, whether he must finally stand or fall, a determination which cannot be altered by any course of conduct; that those who are not appointed to stand must inevitably fall, and those appointed to stand cannot possibly do otherwise; and when they have, in their own opinion, sufficiently proved these positions, they conclude with an earnest exhortation against falling away; which they shew is as much to be dreaded and guarded against, as if it could possibly take place; and they are so accustomed to this inconsistency, that they persevere in it without a blush. But surely, every one but themselves must see, that either their doctrine is false, or their exhortations are useless and absurd. Whenever their doctrine is believed, their exhortations must be disregarded, and when their exhortations are regarded, their doctrines must be disbelieved, No ingenuity can make such palpable contradictions hang together.

They frequently speak of such as fall away, as if it was their own fault and might have been avoided, and warn others by their example. Bunyan says, Christian went on his way, till he saw "three men fast asleep, with fetters upon their heels. Christian seeing them lie in this case, went to them, if peradventure he might awake them; and cried, You are like them that sleep on the top of a mast, Pr. xxiii. 34. For the dead sea is under you, a gulf which hath no bottom: awake, therefore, and come away; be willing also, and I will help you off with your irons. He also told them, If he that goeth about as a roaring lion (1 Pet. v. 8.) comes by you, you will certainly become a prey to his teeth. With that they looked upon him, and began to reply in this sort: Simple said, I see no danger: Sloth said, Yet a little more sleep: and Presumption said, Every tub must stand upon his own bottom. So they lay down to sleep again, and Christian went on his way. Yet was he troubled to think that men in that danger should so little esteem the kindness of him that so freely offered to help them, both by the awakening of them, counselling of them, and proffering to help them off with their irons."

Why Christian took so much pains about these men, and suffered himself to be so troubled on the occasion, is not easily accounted for; because he might have known, that it signifies nothing, whether a man sleeps on the top of a mast, or on the top of a rock, if he must perish at last. And if he can so sleep as not to see a danger which cannot be avoided, it is so much the better. One of the elect is perfectly safe, let him sleep where he will; and as to the non-elect, whether they sleep at the bottom or at the top of the mast, they are always in the same danger. A man sleeping at the top of a mast might possibly be saved, at least by a miracle; but no miracle can save one of the non-elect. Our author, therefore, was inconsistent with his own principles, when he made Christian so anxious to awake these men; for if they were elected, there was no danger of their sleeping too long, they were sure to be effectually awakened

in due time; and if they were not elected, all their awakenings could only serve to increase their eternal condemnation. Christian told them, "that if he that goeth about like a roaring lion comes by, you will certainly become a prey to his teeth. But did he not know, that not one of the elect could ever become a prey to the enemy, and no other can escape his teeth in whatever manner they may be warned? If the old enemy had the good sense to keep in his own place, all his prey would be sent him in due time; he neither can add one to the number or obtain one any sooner, by all his labour of going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it. He labours as fruitlessly to compass men's destruction, as ministers do to effect their salvation. Both labour in vain, if the elect cannot be lost, and no other can be saved.

The following is another specimen of Bunyan's inconsistency. The Interpreter took Christian "by the hand, and led him into a very dark room, where there sat a man in an iron cage. Now the man, to look on, seemed very sad; he sat with his eyes looking down to the ground, his hands folded together, and he sighed as if he would break his heart. Then said Christian to the man, What art thou? The man answered, I am what I was not once. *Chr.* What wast thou once? The man said, I was once a fair and flourishing professor, (Luke viii. 13.) both in mine own eyes, and also in the eyes of others; I once was, as I thought, fair for the celestial city, and had then even joy at the thoughts that I should get thither. *Chr.* Well, but what art thou now? *Man.* I am now a man of despair, and am shut up in it, as in this iron cage. I cannot get out; O no, I cannot. *Chr.* But how camest thou into this condition? *Man.* I left off to watch and be sober; I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts; I sinned against the light of the Word, and the goodness of God; I have grieved the Spirit, and he is gone; I tempted the devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and he has left me; I have so hardened my heart, that I cannot repent. Then said Christian, Is there no hope, but you must be kept in the iron cage of despair? *Man.* No, none at all. *Chr.* Why the Son of the Blessed is very pitiful. *Man.* I have crucified him to myself afresh, (Heb. vi. 6.) I have despised his person, (Luke xix. 14.) I have despised his righteousness; I have counted his blood an unholy thing; I have done despite to the Spirit of Grace, (Heb. x. 28, 29.) Therefore I shut myself out of all the promises, and there now remains to me nothing but threatenings, dreadful threatenings of certain judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour me as an adversary. *Chr.* For what did you bring yourself into this condition? *Man.* For the lusts, pleasures, and profits of the world; in the enjoyment of which, I did then promise myself much delight; but now every one of these things also bite me, and gnaw me, like a burning worm, *Chr.* But canst not thou now repent and turn? *Man.* God hath denied me repentance, his word gives me no encouragement to believe; yea, he himself hath shut me up in this iron cage; nor can all the men in the world let me out. O eternity! eternity! How shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in eternity! *Int.* Then said

the Interpreter to Christian, Let this man's misery be remembered by thee, and be an everlasting caution to thee. Well, said Christian, this is fearful! God help me to watch and be sober, and to pray, and to shun the cause of this man's misery."

All this is consistent with the gospel; but how is it to be reconciled with the calvinistic sentiments of the author? From what is here stated we might be led to suppose, that the man was the cause of his own calamity, and might have been walking in the way to heaven. He is made to confess, that he left off to watch and be sober; that he sinned against the goodness of God, grieved the Spirit, and hardened his heart; by which means he was brought into a hopeless condition. But how does this agree with the unconditional appointment of some to eternal life, and the utter exclusion of all others from the benefits of redemption? Can any sin endanger the salvation of the elect? and can any watching or praying avail for the non-elect? How can a man be said to bring himself into a hopeless condition, when there was never any hope for him? If God has from eternity excluded the non-elect from all possibility of obtaining mercy, they must in every period of their existence be shut up in the iron cage of despair, or be under a delusion—a delusion which cannot last long, and which will leave them worse than it found them. If they do at any time think themselves fair for the celestial city, and rejoice in the prospect of getting thither, it is a delusion which will increase their anguish when they come to discover their disappointment. This man in the iron cage is made to acknowledge, that he had grieved the Holy Spirit, so as to cause his departure. But for what purpose can the Spirit be given to the non-elect? What can be the design of his awakenings, convictions, and illuminations, and of all the other fruits of his operations, if God from eternity determined never to have mercy upon them? Does he enlighten them to make them more blind? does he soften their hearts to make them more hard? does he incline them to sorrow for sin, to make them more guilty? does he draw them to the means of grace, that they may heap up more wrath against the day of wrath? does he dispose them to profess faith in Christ, that they may crucify him afresh? Such must be the inevitable result, and the only discoverable design of the Spirit's operations on the hearts of such as are from eternity excluded from any participation in divine mercy? The real ground of complaint for such a man was not that the Spirit had departed, but that he should ever have been given. If there be no more mercy for the non-elect than for fallen angels, why are they not left without the operations of the Spirit? For when the unclean spirit is cast out of their hearts, it is that he may afterwards return, with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of such is worse than the first.

This man is made to confess, that he had shut himself out of all the promises. But in what sense can the non-elect be interested in any promise of eternal life? Can a faithful Creator have promised salvation to those whom he has eternally hated and excluded, before they were born, from his mercy and grace? and can he have declared

both his promises and his opposite intentions? This man is made to say, that he had exposed himself to threatenings of certain judgment, and fiery indignation. But did he not come into the world thus exposed? Was he not equally exposed to these threatenings, during the time of his fairest profession of religion? and was there ever a moment in his existence, when it was possible for him to be otherwise?

The Interpreter dismisses Christian with this admonition, Let this man's misery be an everlasting caution to thee. But in what sense can the fall of such as could not do otherwise, operate as a caution to such as cannot fall by any means? It may be pleaded, that the Interpreter did not know whether Christian would stand or fall away. But he is supposed to know that the point was determined before he emae into the world, by the decree of Election; he must know, therefore, that all his warnings, admonitions, and exhortations were as useless as if they had been addressed to stocks and stones.

3. Those who maintain Final Perseverance, assert, that no true believer can fail to obtain eternal life. It is granted they may fall into crimes of the deepest dye; but no sin can endanger their salvation; because they will be brought to repentance before they leave the world. It is allowed, that some fall away from the profession, experience, and practice of religion, who are never restored again; but of such it is said, that they were never in the way to heaven; that the Spirit of God only gives his common grace to characters of this description, and that he gives special grace to those who cannot fall finally. It is true the Scripture makes no such distinction in the grace of God, nor can reason discover any such difference in the operations of the Spirit; but it was found requisite to devise some extraordinary expedient, to support a system which neither Scripture nor reason would countenance.

By the account given of this common grace, it appears to be a very valuable acquisition, as far as the present life is concerned. It gives men to taste of the heavenly gift, and of the good word of God; and enables them to escape the corruptions which are in the world, through the knowledge of Christ; it can produce knowledge, faith, love, hope, meekness, temperance, patience, and sanctify those who receive it, through the blood of the covenant. It can make them fruitful in works of righteousness, and fill their minds with peace and joy. But with respect to another world, this common grace is not a blessing, but a curse. For though it can sanctify, it cannot justify. Whatever gracious fruits it produces in those who receive it, it cannot save a soul from hell. Those who are the subjects of it may bring forth those fruits which are a blessing to thousands, and for which future generations will rise up and call them blessed; but all the while they are not only doomed to eternal misery, but by bringing forth such fruit, their future punishment will be augmented. Those who receive least of this common grace, or who receive it without bringing forth any good fruits, will fare the better for it hereafter. There was very little, if any, of this common grace in Sodom and Gomorrah, or if it was given, they received it in vain; it will therefore be more tolerable

for them in the day of Judgment, than for those who receive this grace in the most plentiful measures, and who bring forth its fruits in the greatest perfection. There is nothing does men so much injury in either earth or hell. Yet we are told the Almighty gives it to the non-elect that he may be glorified in their unavoidable and augmented destruction.

With respect to special grace, by the account given by its advocates, we learn that it is irresistible and infallible with respect to eternal salvation; but at the same time very defective with regard to the present life. It can justify the greatest sinners completely; but is so deficient in sanctification, that those who possess it in the greatest abundance, are carnal, sold under sin; full of concupiscence; groaning under a body of sin and death, without any hope of deliverance in the present world. The subjects of this special grace may fall into the most detestable crimes; may take their neighbour's wife, and murder the husband, without any danger to their salvation. They may continue in the vilest courses to their dying hour with perfect safety.

How the difference between common and special grace came to be discovered remains a mystery; and it is equally unaccountable, that the greatest and best Being in the Universe should give this common grace, which cannot fail to be an eternal injury to all who receive it; and likewise that he should give this common grace so plentifully, and be so sparing of that special grace, which never fails to secure the eternal salvation of those on whom it is bestowed. There is also another difficulty in the case, namely, that no man in the present world can determine, whether the grace he possesses be common or special; whether it is that which will promote his salvation, or that which will increase his condemnation.

With respect to special grace, and unconditional Election to eternal life, we have had an opportunity, in former treatises, to shew that these doctrines have no foundation in the word of God; but we have just noticed them here, that the reader may see the source from whence Final Perseverance is derived, and the ground on which it is established. That it is dependant on these doctrines, Calvinists inform us; when they declare, that "of the absolute decrees of the Almighty, Election is an essential part, and of eternal, personal, and unconditional Election, the Final Perseverance of the Saints is a necessary consequence." And as perseverance springs from and is supported by such extravagant and groundless imaginations, it must in itself be equally chimerical and objectionable.

But as this opinion has many advocates and admirers, it will be needful to examine what can be said in its defence; and as nearly the same arguments are advanced by all its vindicators, it is of little importance which of them we examine. None can be more eligible for the purpose than Dr. Dwight, who has devoted the eighty-seventh discourse in his System of Theology to this subject. His great ability for the defence of any article of faith will not be questioned, and his work is now in general circulation.

. In defence of Final Perseverance, the Dr.'s first argument is stated and supported as follows. "It is irrational to suppose that God would leave a work, towards which so much has been done, unaccomplished. To effectuate the salvation of such as believe in Christ, God has sent him to become incarnate, to live a life of humiliation and suffering, and to die upon the cross. He has also sent the Spirit of Grace, to complete, by his almighty energy, this work of infinite mercy, in sanctifying, enlightening, and quickening the soul, and conducting it to heaven. Now, let me ask, is it not in the nature of the case incredible, that Jehovah should commence and carry on this work with such an amazing apparatus of labour and splendor, and leave it unfinished, and should suffer himself to be frustrated in the end? Who can reconcile this supposition with the perfections of God."

To this we reply, that it may be deemed irrational to suppose the Almighty will leave his own work unaccomplished; but whether he will do the whole of man's work is another matter. We do not find it asserted in Scripture, that man is left without having any part to act in the work of religion. The apostle plainly intimates the contrary, when he declares it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure; he likewise says, Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. The Scripture nowhere declares that God will either do our work, or irresistibly compel us to do it. If he did either, he could not be the judge or rewarder of them that diligently seek him. And if any thing be required at our hands, as accountable creatures, there must be a possibility of failure.

If every thing belonging to perseverance be exclusively the work of God, then as many persons persevere as the Almighty intends and desires so to do; and none fall away, who are not under the necessity of doing it, and in this case, what constitutes the crime of apostacy? Is it credible, that the Almighty should require perseverance from us as a duty, if it be entirely his own work? or that he should doom men to eternal misery, for not doing a work which none but himself could do? Are such suppositions reconcileable with the divine perfections?

If God never leaves a work which he undertakes unfinished, then it follows, that he has never begun any good work in them that perish; and in this case, what have they to fall from, except their own delusions or hypocritical professions? And when all their religion is delusion or hypocrisy, why should they be exhorted to persevere therein, and be threatened with eternal misery if they fall away? If the possibility of a believer's falling away cannot be reconciled with the perfections of God, because he has done so much for them; on what principle can we reconcile the fall of man and the fall of angels with these perfections? Had he not done much for them, and did he suffer himself to be frustrated?

If the Almighty never leaves any work unfinished, then the fall of the Jewish church proves that he had done nothing for them; and they were not such ungrateful people as we have been led to suppose; for where no benefit has been received, no ingratitude can be prac-

tised. And the Almighty must have complained without cause, when he said, I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me! He declares he had done much for them; and yet the work had failed; when he says, Could I have done more to my vineyard, than I have done unto it? And when he looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes. If we proceed to the New Testament, we shall find an account of much being done by the Almighty, where the work fails by the unworthiness of men; for Christ came to his own, but his own received him not, which is illustrated by the following parable. A certain king made a marriage for his son; and sent forth his servants, saying, tell them that are bidden, Behold I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come to the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise. And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city. By the feast, in this parable, we are to understand all the blessings of gospel grace; and yet we see this work of God failed, with respect to those who were bidden, because they neglected this great salvation. But the Dr. says, "Is it not incredible, that an Omniscient and Omnipotent Being should form a purpose of this nature; should discover in this wonderful manner that he had it so much at heart; and should yet suffer himself to be frustrated in the end?" This objection lies with as much force against what God declares he has done to his vineyard, and our Saviour's parable of the marriage feast, as it does against the opinion that believers may fall away.

When the Dr. pleads, that it is irrational to suppose that God will leave a work unaccomplished, towards which so much has been done, he lays the stress of his argument on the death of Christ, and the gift of the Spirit. But if this proves what it was intended to do, it proves of course that Christ died for none but those who persevere. And if he died for none else, how can the God of truth and goodness make an offer of him to any others? How can he require them to believe that he died for them, and condemn them for not believing it? If he did not die for them, they had never any possibility of being saved; they do not perish because they fall away; for if they had retained all the religion they ever possessed, if they had held fast the beginning of their confidence stedfast unto the end, they could not have escaped the damnation of hell.

The Scripture speaks of men perishing for whom Christ died, and declares it will be the case with those who deny the Lord that bought them. This evidently implies, that after God has done much for them, they may fall away, and perish everlastingly; which completely overturns the Dr.'s argument.

The objection which the Dr. here produces against the possibility of believers' falling away, is an inference drawn from disputed positions, which can be of no force till the positions be proved, and will be altogether needless afterwards. Before perseverance can be made

to depend exclusively on what God has done or will do for us, it must be proved that we are not in a state of probation; that God saves some irresistibly, and leaves some without any adequate assistance; that the divine will is not frustrated by any sins men commit, but would be so if they were in any degree holier than they are; that when God does his part, men never fail to do theirs; that God makes all the moral difference between one man and another—a difference that will issue in the eternal felicity of some, and the endless torment of others. That for no reason but his own will, God gives his saving grace to a comparatively small part of mankind, and withholds it from all the rest, whom he has always hated from eternity; yet he offers them salvation through Christ, strives with them by his Spirit, gives them many gracious promises and invitations, and swears he has no pleasure in their death, and all the while he leaves them in as helpless and hopeless a state, as if they were already confined under chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day. Till all these positions be proved, the Dr.'s argument has no foundation to rest upon, and after they are proved it will be useless, because there will be nothing left for it to do.

The Dr.'s argument might have been refuted by one plain observation, namely, that all the great things which he mentions as being done for believers, were done for St. Paul; yet he did not think his defection impossible, for he says, I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest after I have preached to others I should become a castaway.

5. The Dr. proceeds to observe, "2dly. The continuance of saints in holiness follows irresistibly from their Election. Saints are declared, abundantly throughout the Scriptures, to be chosen of God. Rev. xvii. 14. Luke xviii. 7. Rom. viii. 33. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

"It is to be remembered, that this appellation is given to Christians universally. In the passages already quoted it is plain, that the names elect and chosen, which you know are the same in the Greek, are equivalent to saints or Christians; and accordingly are addressed to them without distinction. But can it be supposed, that a purpose of God, thus formed, will be frustrated? As this is declared of Christians, as such; it is evident, that it is alike applicable to all Christians. If, therefore, any Christian ceases to be holy; this purpose of God, solemnly adopted and declared, will in one instance be frustrated; and in every instance in which this event takes place. Thus far, God will be finally disappointed of one end of his government, really proposed by him, and expressly announced to the universe. Who can believe this concerning the Creator?"

We answer, that perseverance follows of course from Calvinistic Election; but not from any Election mentioned in Scripture; a question we have sufficiently discussed in a discourse on that subject, to which we refer the reader, in order to shorten the present reply.

The Dr. here states, that the term elect is equivalent to saints or Christians, and accordingly is addressed to them without distinction. This is granting all we need to contend for, and what will utterly demolish his whole system. We need not thank him for this admis-

sion, because there is nothing more easily proved from Scripture, than that the term elect or election is applied indiscriminately to whole communities, where there was always a mixture of characters, both good and bad. All the Jews were called God's elect people, and so likewise are all professing Christians. Both these communities, in their collective capacity, are in Scripture termed a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people. But how does it appear that perseverance in holiness irresistibly follows from this Election? Did all the Jews persevere in holiness, or was this the case with all the members of the Christian Church? As this is what no person ever did or could imagine, then it irresistibly follows, that Scripture Election is no proof of perseverance.

If it be pleaded, that all the Jews and Christians persevered, who were really holy, it may be replied, that this is begging not proving the question; besides, it is a departure from the principle on which he set out, which was to prove, that perseverance in holiness irresistibly follows from Election; and if this follows from Election, it of course follows that every member of either the Jewish or Christian community was finally saved. For they were all indisputably elected, if the Scriptures are any guide to the meaning of that term. Judas was expressly declared by Christ to be one of his elect people, and according to the argument here employed, he must have been finally saved, and could not have been otherwise, if he had sold his master thirty times for one piece of silver.

If it be pleaded, that Election signifies an unconditional appointment of certain persons to eternal life; we reply, that no such Election can be found in the Scriptures. But if such was the sense of Election, then it would follow, that all who fall away were not elected, and the want of Election rendered their fall inevitable; while such as are elected must of necessity persevere; and in this case, what propriety can there be in warning professing Christians against apostacy; since it is a calamity in which one part of professors can never be involved, and what the other part cannot possibly avoid? To warn men against a danger they cannot shun, can neither proceed from a good design, nor answer a good purpose; and to warn men who are secured against all possibility of defection, is both useless and ridiculous.

The Scripture speaks as if it was a matter of great importance to give men proper warning. The word of the Lord, says Ezekiel, came unto me, saying, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. And again, When a righteous man doeth turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hands. What could the prophet make of such a message as this, supposing him to understand the doctrine of Unconditional

Election, which infallibly secures the salvation of some, and leaves all the rest to inevitable destruction? How could he reconcile this with men perishing for want of proper warning? or what could he suppose was the design of the Almighty in having people warned, whose destiny he had rendered irrevocable by the decree of Election, before the world began? Unless warning would have prevented their destruction, with what justice could their blood be required at the prophet's hand? To consign men before they are born to eternal destruction, and then to pretend it was the prophet's neglect of duty which had caused them to perish, is very strange. How could the people believe that the prophet had received such a message from heaven, or how could they take any warning he might give them? No warning can be any farther taken than as men believe the threatened evil may take place; when they know it cannot take place, no warning can affect them; they must therefore either have disbelieved the doctrine contended for, or have disregarded the prophet's warnings.

Infinite wisdom and goodness can never send a messenger to warn people who are in no danger; nor to warn those that are in danger, without affording them the possibility of avoiding it. The scripture therefore knows of no election which puts some out of all danger, and excludes others from any well grounded hope of eternal life. And as the Dr.'s position is fallacious, the argument he deduces from it of course falls to the ground.

6. He proceeds to observe, "3dly. If Christians continue not in holiness unto the end, the Intercession of Christ will be frustrated. In reply, it may be noticed, that the Dr. in other parts of his work pleads that Christ made an atonement for the whole human race; and the Scriptures most uniformly declare that Christ tasted death for every man; from which it follows that some perish for whom Christ died; but if those may perish for whom Christ shed his precious blood, they may perish for whom he intercedes. The intercession of Christ must correspond with the terms of the gospel covenant; He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. Those who do not continue to comply with the terms of the covenant forfeit its blessings; and we have no reason in the world to suppose, that Christ prays for our salvation, on any other terms, than those specified in the gospel. And whether men use or abuse the grace procured by this intercession, it is equally efficacious in itself, and honourable to Christ.

With respect to the intercession of Christ being frustrated, we would ask, Is the Gospel frustrated when men neglect this great salvation? If not, the Intercession is not frustrated when men forfeit its benefits. The patience and long-suffering of God are exercised to bring men to repentance; and it is no disparagement to these perfections, when men do not repent; the divine goodness is equally conspicuous in the favours bestowed, whether they are properly received or contemptuously rejected; and the same remark applies to our Saviour's intercession.

Calvinists exultingly assert, that God's purposes cannot be frustrated. If we take this as they appear to intend we should, it follows that no man ever displeased his Maker; and that there is no more sin nor misery in the world than he intends there should be; and in this case, it is in vain for man to endeavour to make them less than they are. These Divines however as pointedly contradict themselves on this subject, they tell us that the chief end of man is to know God, to glorify him, and enjoy him for ever. This we suppose to be true; but when men perish in their iniquities, they do not enjoy God for ever; and in this case it may be said, that the divine purpose is frustrated. If it be pleaded, that God's glory, which is his ultimate purpose, will be promoted either by man's salvation or his destruction, or whatever other explication be given, it will equally apply to the intercession of Christ.

The possibility of falling away, shews the use and importance of our Saviour's intercession. If certain persons are infallibly appointed to eternal life, before the world began, of what use can it be for Christ to pray that this end may be accomplished? If the thing is previously and unconditionally decreed to come to pass, nothing can be attributed to the efficacy of his prayers, and he must exercise this office in vain and without any discernable motive. But if we are in a state of trial, wherein we sometimes offend God, and thereby endanger our salvation, it is a matter of great thankfulness and encouragement that we have one to intercede for us at the Father's right hand. Such encouragement the apostle suggests when he says, If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ the righteous. But if the apostle had told us at the same time, that our salvation is infallibly secured by the decree of Election, so that we cannot fall away notwithstanding the most enormous sins we can commit, we should not have been able to discover what use there is in having an advocate with the Father. Such a decree frustrates the Saviour's intercession by rendering it useless.

It may be supposed that the Dr. will explain himself before he has done; let us therefore hear him to the end. After quoting John xvii. 20, he adds, "In this petition, Christ prays the Father, that all those who should believe in him through the word of the apostles, that is, all Christians, may become partakers of that divine union, which, in the heavens, is the most perfect created resemblance of the ineffable union of the Father and the Son. If then, any Christian fails of sharing in this union, the prayer of Christ here recited, will not be answered." This is all he thought proper to say on this part of the subject. It will therefore be seen, that his subsequent enlargement, adds neither light nor strength to his first proposition.

With respect to the prayer of Christ not being answered, we reply, that the prayers of Christ must correspond with the tenor of divine truth, in which we read, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life; but if the just who lives by faith draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. We cannot rationally suppose, that Christ will pray the Father to contradict his own word; either

to save us, or grant us any favour, contrary to the terms specified in the Scriptures. The prayers of Christ will therefore be answered, according to their real intent and meaning, whether the persons he prays for be saved or lost. When Christ was on the cross, he prayed that his murderers might be forgiven; but we have no reason to suppose that they all obtained mercy. But they had afterwards an offer of life and salvation, when repentance and remission of sins were preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Had they then repented, their iniquities would have been blotted out—their sin in crucifying Christ would not have been laid to their charge. And as the prayer of Christ procured them grace for repentance; whether they repented or not, his prayer was answered with respect to the real intent and meaning of it. So it is with respect to the perseverance of saints, whether they persevere or not.

Our Saviour prayed for Peter, that his faith might not fail; yet the faith of Peter afterwards failed, when he denied his master by uttering falsehoods, oaths, and curses. Faith without works is dead; and therefore, Peter's faith must have been dead when he fell into this sin. But we not only conclude, that his faith failed on account of the greatness of his crime, but likewise on account of the state in which he was afterwards found. He needed conversion; hence our Saviour said, When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren. But men with true faith cannot need conversion; they may need an increase of faith, but this is never in Scripture called conversion. Yet the prayer of Christ in this instance was no doubt answered according to its real intention, by procuring for Peter those supplies from above, during the temptation, which were sufficient for him so as to make a way for his escape, had he been faithful to the grace received.

We are aware that it is strenuously asserted, that Peter's faith did not fail; but such assertions pass for nothing without proof; and this has never yet been given. If it be pleaded, that his faith did not fail because Christ prayed that it might not fail; we reply, that from this it follows, that Christ did not pray that he might be preserved from falling into sin, or he could not have fallen into it; he only prayed that his faith might not be entirely lost. And as Christ came to set us an example, we may offer up the same kind of petitions; we may use the same words in the same signification. When we pray that our faith may not fail, we may intend by this request a permission to fall into the greatest crimes, providing our faith be not utterly destroyed. But is there any man living who durst offer such an insult to the Majesty of Heaven, as our opponents suppose Christ to have done in the instance before us?

It is likewise contended, that Peter's faith did not fail, because saving faith cannot be lost. By this it appears, that Christ did not pray that Peter might be preserved from sin; though for any thing we know there was a possibility of his preservation; but he prayed for a faith to be preserved, which could not possibly be lost. In this case, what advantage did Peter derive from this prayer? Can any rational creature believe that this was the meaning of Christ, when he said to Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Our

Saviour certainly meant that he had prayed that Peter's faith might be so strong as to keep him from falling. The prayers of Christ do not supersede the necessity of our own watching and praying. The apostle says, Having such an high priest, let us come boldly to a throne of grace. But on the principles contended for, he should have drawn from his premises an opposite conclusion. He should have said, we have an high priest which ever liveth to make intercession for us; he prays for whatever is needful; and his prayers cannot fail to be answered; and therefore there is no need for us to pray for any thing at all.

Those who contend that believers cannot fall away because Christ prays for their perseverance, must admit, that on this principle Christ does not pray for their preservation from sin. He does not pray that they may be preserved from drunkenness, theft, adultery, and murder; because many of them fall into those crimes, which they could not do if Christ had prayed for their preservation from them. And if he does not pray that we may be kept from such sins, what encouragement have we to pray for it, or what motive can we have for so doing? When our opponents contend that every thing will be granted which Christ prays for, it follows that he does not pray that some of his people may not be hanged for robbery and murder. It is granted that they may obtain repentance after sentence is passed upon them for such crimes; which they could not have obtained unless they had been elected from eternity; and as these had always been his dear elect people, it is strange that he should never pray for their conversion till they came to the gallows. Had he prayed for them soon enough, their sin and disgrace would have been prevented. It appears by this doctrine, that there is no more sin in the world than he wishes there to be; because he never prays for it to be less. It seems he does not desire any of his people to be any better than they are; for if he did, he would pray for it; and if he prayed for it, it would be granted.

We are told, that he never prays for any of the non-elect, though they have most occasion to be prayed for. It may indeed be pleaded, that it would be useless to pray for those who are under an irresistible decree of eternal destruction. But with this we are not satisfied; because this consideration did not prevent our Saviour from commanding us to offer up prayers and supplications for all men; nor does it prevent him from offering mercy to all, nor from striving with them by his Holy Spirit. It did not prevent him from weeping over Jerusalem, and saying, How often would I have gathered you, as a hen doeth her chickens under her wings, and you would not. The Scripture nowhere tells us that Christ does not pray for all men, it declares that he makes intercession for transgressors, without any intimation that it is confined to any particular description of them. He prayed for his murderers, and commands us to pray for all, and the benefits of his intercession are offered to all without exception; we are therefore persuaded, that he prays for all in every age and nation.

Some Calvinists, after the intercession of Christ, allege the prayers of saints, as a proof of perseverance. Dr. G. R. Williams, in his

Best Religion, page 483, says, "The saints do pray for perseverance, therefore they have it; for why should it be sought, if it be not granted? saith St. Augustine. But Christ saith, whatsoever ye ask in my name, you shall receive it. But thou wilt say, thou hast requested spiritual things, and yet thou hast not obtained them. I answer, that either thou hast obtained, or shalt be sure to obtain, if thou doest not desist from seeking; for we must not prescribe any time to God; because, as he worketh grace in whom he will, so he worketh it when he will."

In reply to this, we may observe, that it will be granted, that we shall obtain every needful blessing from above, if we do not desist from seeking it; or, as St. James says, if we have not, it is because we ask not, or because we ask amiss. But this does not prove that it is impossible to desist from seeking those blessings; nor does it prove that they will be granted to such as do not continue to seek for them. The Dr. in this place lengthens the debate, without adding strength to his cause; for if Final Perseverance cannot be proved from the intercession of Christ, neither can it be proved from the prayers of saints. It has often been observed, that if praying does not keep us from sinning, sinning will keep us from praying; and this is often practically exemplified. If sinning wilfully did not cause men to desist from praying, it would render their prayers ineffectual: if we regard iniquity in our hearts, God will not hear our prayers. St. John says, we know that God always heareth us, because we do those things that please him; which implies, that if we do not those things which please him, our prayers will not be answered. And as no man can be sure that his prayers will keep him from the commission of flagrant crimes, no man can be certain that they will keep him from falling away.

The argument drawn from the intercession of Christ, Dr. Dwight quitted with great precipitancy; as if he found the ground ready to sink under him; but with the next argument he seems better satisfied, and dwells upon it with a higher tone of confidence. What reason he had for this, we shall now inquire.

7. "4thly." he says, "If the holiness of Christians does not continue unto the end, the joy of heaven over their conversion is groundless and in vain. Our Saviour informs us, that there is joy over one, that is, over every sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. No error exists in heaven. All the perceptions of its inhabitants are accordant with truth; all their emotions are founded in truth. The joy, excited there by the continuance of ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance (that is, persons perfectly just) in their holiness, is a joy, founded on the everlasting holiness of these persons, and the everlasting happiness by which it is inseparably attended. The joy, excited by the repentance of a sinner, is however greater than even these. As this is unconditionally asserted by Christ, it is unnecessary for me, in the present case, to inquire into the reason of the fact. But a joy, excited by the repentance of a sinner, whose everlasting holiness, and consequent everlasting happiness, is uncertain,

nay. who may never be holy or happy at all, beyond the first and feeblest efforts and enjoyments of a Christian in his infantine state; cannot be founded in truth, nor dictated by wisdom. Nay, it cannot be accordant with common sense. Upon the plan here adopted, the object on which this joy is founded, although a penitent to-day, may be a reprobate to-morrow—may become a more miserable wretch than if he had never repented. In this case, there would be no foundation for joy at all. What, in this case, would be the conduct of rational men in the present world? We have instances enough of their conduct in cases substantially of a similar nature to furnish us with an unerring answer to this question. They would, as in all cases of such uncertainty they actually do, indulge a timorous, trembling hope, that the case might end well; that the penitent might persevere, and finally become safe. They would experience a degree of satisfaction, that this first step had been taken, and would feel a continual, anxious suspense, lest others equally indispensable should not follow. What wise and good men in this world would feel on such an occasion, wiser and better men in the world to come must of necessity also feel, and feel much more intensely; because they comprehend the subject in a manner so much clearer, juster, and more perfect. Of course, their suspense, their anxiety, must exist in a far higher degree. Such a suspense, such an anxiety, must, one would think, embitter even the happiness of heaven. Frustrated expectations of great good, also, are in this world sources of extreme sorrow. The same fact must in that benevolent world be a source of the same sorrow. But how often, according to this scheme, must such expectations be there frustrated. Can this be reconcileable with a state of unmingled happiness?"

Here the Dr.'s complacency is sufficiently manifest; but the cause of it is not so obvious. If he imagined that he was using any thing like argument, in all this new divinity, he was altogether mistaken. Rational men in the present world, he says, in cases of such uncertainty, indulge a timorous, trembling hope, and frustrated expectations are sources of sorrow; and what wise and good men in this world would feel on such an occasion, wiser and better men in the world to come must feel more intensely. This is proceeding upon the principle of analogy, in a case where no analogy is known to exist. If it does exist, the happiness of heaven is not complete; fear and grief have not expired in the mansions above. Tears run down our eyes because men keep not God's law; but though the heavenly host have clearer views of the excellency of the law, and of the evils which attend its violation, we have no reason to conclude, that this circumstance is any interruption to their felicity. But how it is, that the keeping of the law affords them joy, and the breach of it occasions no grief, is one of those secret things which belong to God; while those which are revealed belong to us and to our children.

Jeremiah wished that his head was waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of his people; and St. Paul did not express less anxiety

and grief for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh; and it may be allowed, that wise and good men in the world to come see those things more clearly; but that they feel them more intensely, does not appear. A certain knowledge that any one of our relatives was eternally lost, would to us be a source of unspeakable grief; but this circumstance could give no trouble to good men in another world; for the Scripture informs us that they enjoy perfect and unmingled felicity. The Doctor's argument is therefore manifestly false, which attempts to prove, that what is a source of sorrow to us, must be the same to wiser and better men in the world to come.

His design is to prove, that if repentance did not in every case render salvation secure, it could only produce a timorous, trembling hope; and when any penitent fell away, it would be a source of extreme sorrow to the company of heaven. This we have already shewn is drawing an inference from unestablished positions, and from positions which cannot be established without overturning the Scriptures. And we may now take another view of the subject, and may observe, that every display of the divine goodness affords a proper ground of joy to the angels, and all the inhabitants of heaven; and this is the case, even when that goodness may be so abused as to be productive of much evil. When God had finished the work of creation, he saw that every thing was good; and at the display of that goodness, the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. But that good which was such a source of joy was liable to abuse, as subsequent events have sufficiently proved. Men transgressed the divine law; the earth was cursed for man's sake; all flesh corrupted its way; the whole earth after some time was filled with violence, and the world devoted to destruction; but the possibility of these things happening did not prevent that burst of joy at the creation; and when all these disasterous events took place, we are not informed that it caused any sorrow to the inhabitants of heaven. But if the sons of God could feel so much joy at a good which was liable to so much perversion, and feel no sorrow when it was perverted; on the same principle, they may rejoice at the repentance of a sinner, though that repentance is not necessarily connected with Final Perseverance; and they may feel no sorrow when such fall away. On the principle contended for by our author, the creation of angels was not a proper subject of joy; because some of the angels afterwards fell away; and their fall must have been a source of extreme sorrow to those angels who kept their first estate; but these notions are not found in the Scriptures, and we should beware of such vain and deceitful philosophy.

It was not requisite to refute the separate parts of what is here advanced by the Dr. for the whole may be overthrown together; a proper view of the passage will shew, that his arguments have no foundation in truth; they are not only weak, but utterly and evidently fallacious. By just persons who need no repentance we are to understand such as are living in the fear and favour of God. There is nothing said respecting them, it is to be observed, which proves either that they never had needed repentance, or that they never

would need it again. Calvin's note on the passage is as follows, "The scope of this parable is to shew, that we ought not through neglect to suffer them to perish, whom God would have to be saved. The word repentance here is to be understood especially of that repentance whereby a man being altogether adverse unto God, and dead, doeth rise up again, by being turned unto godliness; for, as repentance is usually taken, we all need it daily. And yet if we be already in the right way, we need no repentance, whereby this way is entered into, because we are in it already." Baxter's note is the following, "The heavenly society rejoice over one converted sinner, more than over many that need no conversion from a state of sin, (though they need daily sorrow for daily sins.) Note, more joy signifieth not more love to that person; but Christ speaketh of the angels, after the manner of men, that are most affected with unexpected things, and after sorrow most rejoice."

By these quotations it will be seen, that Calvinistic commentators, by just men, understand the people of God in the present life; and the fact which our Saviour states, is, that there is more joy over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance; and if this can be the case on the supposition that all the persons mentioned are certain to persevere, it will equally be the case on the supposition that they are all liable to fall away. Our Saviour does not state the degree of joy that is felt on the occasion, but asserts that it is greater in the one case than in the other; which will equally hold on the supposition that all may fall away, as on the supposition that all must of necessity persevere. This passage therefore, does not afford the shadow of an argument in favour of Final Perseverance.

So far is this passage from furnishing an argument in favour of Final Perseverance, that it is a decisive proof of the very reverse; as will appear from a view of it in connexion with the preceding verses; which are as follows. "What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that joy shall likewise be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." When a man is said to have more joy over a lost sheep which he has found again, than over ninety and nine which had never gone astray, it does not signify that he places any more value upon it than any of the rest; but the recovery of it after it had been lost, produces more sensible pleasure for the present moment, than is felt from the possession of all the others. Into the reason of this we need not inquire, as the fact is not only stated in Scripture, but is confirmed by every person's experience who ever found any thing he highly valued, after it had been given up for lost. This joy did not arise from the notion that the sheep could never go astray any more; but at finding it

after it had been in danger of being lost for ever. This joy the owner could not have felt, if he had believed in the final perseverance of his sheep. Supposing a man to know that he cannot by any means be deprived of any one of his flock; that they may sometimes wander from the fold, but are under an inevitable necessity of returning again to their owner; in that case, when he finds one gone astray, he has no more fear respecting it than he has with regard to the rest; because he knows they are all equally safe. And, as on this principle he can have no more fear over one gone astray, than over such as remain in the fold, he can have no more joy at its return; because its return to the fold is a matter of course, which he knew could not fail to take place. So if the decree of Election has rendered the salvation of all the flock of Christ secure against all possibility of being lost; they are as perfectly safe when they wander from the fold, as when they remain in it; and those who know this, can feel no more joy at the return of one to the fold, than over one that never went astray. The superior joy felt at the conversion of a sinner, arises from a consciousness of the greater danger he was in before his conversion. But if he was in no more danger than others, there could be no more joy at his return. But there is more joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth; therefore, such a sinner must have been in danger of perishing. By this it appears, that this passage proves Calvinistic Election and Perseverance to be false.

8. The Dr. proceeds as follows: "5thly. That the holiness of Christians should not continue to the end, is inconsistent with many scriptural declarations. We know, saith St. John, that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. 1 John iii. 14. It is impossible for any person to know, that he has passed from death unto life, unless he has actually thus passed. But St. John declares, that himself, and such other Christians as love the brethren, have this knowledge; or perhaps more conformably with the apostle's real design, all Christians know this, who know that they love the brethren. The love of the brethren is certain, absolute proof, that all those in whom it exists have passed from death unto life. And this proof exists, whether perceived by him, who is the subject of this love, or not perceived. But every Christian loves the brethren; and that, from the moment in which he becomes a Christian. Every Christian, therefore, has actually passed from death unto life. This, however, cannot be true, unless every Christian perseveres in holiness unto the end. Every Christian does therefore persevere."

The Dr. here enters a new field of discussion; having exhausted other sources of argument, he comes now to Scripture testimony; and if a proof of the doctrine in question can be found anywhere, it must be in Scripture. And if it can be found in Scripture, we may expect the Dr. will not fail to produce those passages where it is contained. But when the passage before us is brought forward as a proof of perseverance, it cannot fail to excite surprize; and our surprize is not in the least abated by hearing all he has said on this

part of the subject. In selecting these words of Scripture as a proof of his doctrine, he is not so unfortunate as in his last argument; for though they have no reference whatever to the point in dispute; yet they do not furnish a direct proof to the contrary. There was, however, some exercise of ingenuity displayed before, of which we can discover no traces on the present occasion. For as to any shadow of reason or argument, the whole paragraph is a complete blank.

Every Christian he says, does therefore persevere. But how is this made to appear? from what position is this inference drawn? St. John states that such as love the brethren, know they are passed from death unto life; but he does not give the least intimation that they must of necessity always continue in this happy state. That they are passed from death unto life, says the Dr. cannot be true, unless every Christian perseveres in holiness unto the end. But this is merely asserting what requires to be proved; which is the most contemptible method of disputation. When it is asserted that spiritual life cannot be lost, nor a title to eternal life forfeited, we demand the proof; and if such proof can be furnished, it must be from some other source, the passage before us is totally silent on the subject. The proofs which our author supposed other sources to furnish, have already been examined and refuted. Our first parent had as much of the life of God in his soul, and as good a title to heaven, as believers possess at the present time; and if he fell from that happy state, there can be nothing in the nature of spiritual life, that will prove it impossible for believers to fall away. St. John was not aware, that any thing which either himself or any other inspired person had written, proved perseverance to be infallibly certain; as appears by his earnest exhortations to avoid falling away. Look, he says, to yourselves, that ye lose not what has been wrought, that you may receive a full reward. And now, beloved children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

The Dr. proceeds, "Being confident, says St. Paul, of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. The word, here rendered perform, signifies to finish or complete. St. Paul was confident, therefore, that the Spirit of God, who had begun a good work, viz. the work of sanctification in the Philippian Christians, would continue to complete it, by various steps, until it was brought to perfection. But Paul, under the influence of inspiration, could not mistake concerning these subjects. His confidence was founded in truth. The work begun in the Philippian Christians was completed. Of course it will be completed in all other Christians."

To this we reply, that the apostle here expresses a confidence, not a certainty, of the event taking place. And there is a wide difference between confidence and certainty. A man in health may be confident that he can walk a mile; but he is not certain that he can walk a yard. Our confidence is often shaken by subsequent events; but certainty always remains the same. The apostle intimates, that Christians may cast away their confidence, which hath great recom-

pense of reward. It was a confidence, therefore, which was well founded. But if such a confidence might be cast away, he could not be certain that his confidence with respect to the Philippians would meet with no disrappointment.

If the apostle's confidence had been founded, as some suppose, on the absolute necessity of Christian perseverance, he would have had the same confidence with respect to all Christian Churches; for all Christian Churches were God's elect people. But with respect to some of them, he was afraid, lest he had bestowed upon them labour in vain. The confidence, therefore, which he expresses in reference to the Philippians, more than for others, could not be founded on their Christian privileges, which they enjoyed only in common with other Churches; but on their superior improvements, their greater advancement in holiness, and their extraordinary stability in their trials and persecutions. That this was the foundation of his confidence, he expressly declares in the next verse. Even, he says, as it is meet for me to think thus of you. He lets them know, it was meet for him thus to think, because of their great affection for him, and their patience under like sufferings. "Now he who only gives us these reasons for his confidence, gives us just reason to conceive he knew nothing of their perseverance by virtue of their election to salvation."

The Dr. observes, "St. Paul could not mistake concerning this subject." This is admitted, when we maintain that his confidence was real and well founded. We may charitably hope, that some of the Galatians were saved, to whom the apostle said, Be not weary in well doing; for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not. But if many of them obtained salvation, the apostle was not mistaken when he said, I am afraid lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. For whatever improvement they might afterwards make, his fear for them at that time was both real and well founded. But if the supposition that some of the Galatians were saved, did not prove the apostle to have been mistaken, with regard to his fears; neither does the supposition that some of the Philippians might fall away, prove him to have been mistaken with regard to his confidence; because his confidence at the time was both real and well founded. If the apostle's confidence with respect to the Philippians proves that they all persevered in holiness, his fears with respect to the Galatians proves that they were all eternally lost.

The Dr. to strengthen his argument, states as a fact, that the work begun in the Philippian Christians was completed. Now supposing this to have been the case, it does not contradict the opinion, that it was possible for them to fall away; for every thing is not done which possibly might be done. But we have to ask, what does he mean by the work being completed? If he means that every member of that Church persevered in holiness to the end, how did he obtain this information? nothing of the kind is recorded, either with regard to the Philippian or any other Church. If he did not mean by this assertion, that every member of that Church attained eternal life, his assertion is foreign to the point in dispute; and if this was

his meaning, he asserts as a fact, what is destitute of all evidence, and what is in direct opposition to all probability.

Having asserted, that the work begun among the Philippians was completed, he adds, "Of course it will be completed in all other Christians." But how does this come to follow as a matter of course? If those who adorn the Gospel persevere in holiness, does it follow that such as walk disorderly must of course do the same? if so, it must depend upon some principle undiscoverable by reason or Scripture, and which gives the greatest encouragement to immorality.

What the apostle says in one place, should be so understood, as not to contradict what he says in another. If any person should maintain that all the Galatians were lost, because the apostle who could not be mistaken declared, he was afraid that he had bestowed upon them labour in vain; he might be refuted by what the apostle says in other parts of that epistle. Grace, he says, be to you, and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. I have confidence in you through the Lord. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. From such passages we may conclude, that the apostle's fear of them was no certain proof of their destruction. In like manner, if it be asserted, that the apostle's confidence with respect to the Philippians is a proof that it was impossible for them to fall away; this opinion may be refuted by what he says in other parts of the same epistle; as where he exhorts them to stand fast in one spirit, striving with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel, and to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. These exhortations implied a possibility of their falling away, otherwise the apostle must be supposed to have informed them, that they could not fail to be stedfast and immoveable, and therefore he advised them to stand fast; that their salvation was infallibly secured, and therefore he admonished them to work it out with fear and trembling. That is, he advised them to work, when he knew they could not possibly avoid working; to fear, where he knew no fear was; to tremble, lest they should fail of eternal life, though it was well understood that no failure could possibly take place. If the apostle was capable of such contradictions, there is no dependance to be placed on what he has advanced; if he could be so inconsistent as to exhort the Philippians to fear and tremble where there was no danger, he might be confident where there was no ground for confidence.

The Dr. proceeds as follows: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, says our Saviour, he that heareth my word, and believeth in him that hath sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is (hath) passed from death unto life. John v. 24. In this passage it is declared, that he that heareth the word of Christ, and believeth on him, by whom he was sent, has passed from death unto life. What is meant by this phrase is also decisively explained, when it is said, Every such person hath everlasting life; and when it is further said, He shall not come into condemnation. But every

Christian, when he becomes a Christian, hears the words of Christ, and believes on him that sent him. Therefore every Christian has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but has already passed from death unto life."

To this we reply, that what our Saviour says in this place, shews the great privileges of a Christian, but does by no means prove, that those privileges cannot be forfeited. It is declared, that a believer hath eternal life, and shall not come into condemnation; but by comparing this with other passages of Scripture, we find, that this is the case only so long as they hold fast faith and a good conscience; concerning which some have made shipwreck. For if a man abide not in Christ, he is cast out as a branch that is withered, &c. Hence the apostle says, Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.

With respect to the declaration, that believers shall not come into condemnation, it may be observed, that the Scripture frequently speaks in this manner, when it is undeniably evident that a change may take place. It is said, He that believeth not shall not see life. The carnal mind is at enmity with God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Know ye not, that the unrighteous cannot inherit the kingdom of God? Neither thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. These and such like passages, by the rule of interpretaion adopted by our opponents, exclude every man from all hope of salvation; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. But if we compare these passages with many others, an encouraging light will be thrown upon them, and we shall see that sinners may escape the wrath to come. When the apostle is speaking of those who shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven, he says, And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Repent ye, therefore, says St. Peter, and be converted; that your iniquities may be blotted out. By comparing these passages together, we learn, that when the Scripture declares that unbelievers shall not see life, and shall not inherit the kingdom of God, it is descriptive of their state while they remain unbelievers; but it does by no means imply that their deliverance is impossible. In like manner, when it is said, that believers have eternal life abiding in them, and shall not come into condemnation, it is a description of their gospel privileges, while they continue to walk by faith; but it does not imply that these privileges cannot be forfeited; for those who enjoy them are warned of their danger, some have lost them, and we are to take heed lest we fall after the same example of unbelief, and our names be blotted from the book of life. Believers are said to have eternal life abiding in them, because they have a title to eternal life by their justification, and a capacity for it, and a foretaste of it, by their regeneration. But eternal life is no more abiding in them now, than eternal death was abiding in them before their conversion; for the wrath of God

abideth on all unbelievers; and it is declared they shall not see life. Hence scriptural declarations no more prove that believers must necessarily persevere in holiness, than they prove that unbelievers must necessarily persevere in wickedness.

If the Scriptures said no more on the subject than this, that unbelievers shall not see life, and believers shall not come into condemnation, we might conclude that the unrighteous must be unrighteous still, and the holy, holy still; but from other parts of Scripture we learn, that such a state of things has not yet taken place; for if it had, repentance would no more be preached to the wicked, nor warnings given to the righteous. So long as repentance is preached to the one, and warnings given to the others, they must both be in a state of probation, or there could be no consistency in the word of God.

"Declarations of the same import," says Dr. Dwight, "abound in the Scriptures. It cannot be necessary to multiply quotations any farther. If these are not believed, none will be believed." On this point we agree, namely, that if the passages already noticed do not prove final perseverance, the opinion cannot be proved from any other passage contained in Scripture; and it has been shewn, that these passages prove nothing of the kind, nor have any connection with the subject whatever.

9. From scriptural declarations the Dr. proceeds to promises. "6thly," he says, "The doctrine against which I contend, is inconsistent with many scriptural promises. Such a promise is contained in the passage last recited. He that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, shall not come into condemnation. Another is contained in the following words, John vi. 37, Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Every Christian has come to Christ, in the very sense of this passage. Should he, then, be rejected afterward, he would be as really cast out, as if rejected at first; and the promise would not be performed. Another example of the same nature is found in Mark xvi. 16, He that believeth shall be saved. Every Christian has believed; every Christian will therefore be saved. Another is found in John x. 27, 28, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. Another in the 9th verse of the same chapter, I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved. All these are promises uttered by Christ himself; and it will not be denied, that he understood the import of his own promises, nor that he will faithfully perform it to the uttermost. Finally, St. Paul has declared his views concerning this subject in a manner which one would expect to terminate the controversy. Moreover, says the apostle, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. This is both a declaration and a promise; and in both respects is unconditional and universal. In the most express language it asserts that every one, who is effectually called, is justified, and will in the end be glorified also. But every Christian is thus called."

Whether these promises are any more to the point, than the former declarations, we are now to consider. The first has been noticed already, the next is, Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out; from which our author concludes, that if believers are not finally saved, this promise will not be performed. And he might with as much reason conclude, that if any sinner be saved, God's threatenings cannot be performed; where he says, the soul that sinneth it shall die. By such a mode of argument the Scriptures may be reduced to a mass of contradictions, by which no truth can be proved nor any system established. In a promise of Scripture, we often find many things implied which are not expressed. So in the passage before us, a proper manner of coming to Christ is to be understood, though it is not expressed; for those who came as the foolish virgins, or as the man without a wedding garment, will be cast out, so likewise will those, who came after the master of the house has shut to the door. The coming intended in the promise, is believing with the heart unto righteousness; those who thus come, Christ will admit to all the privileges of the gospel kingdom; he will receive them graciously and love them freely. But as we have to bring other parts of Scripture into view, in order to know what is meant by coming to Christ, we have to do the same with respect to the terms on which they continue to enjoy his favour, for we cannot expect a single passage to contain a whole system of divinity. And by other parts of Scripture we learn, that such as have obtained the divine favour, in order to continue therein, are to hold fast whereunto they have attained; they are to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation; they are to beware, lest being led away by the error of the wicked, they fall from their stedfastness. They are to continue in goodness, otherwise they shall be cut off. He that abideth not in me, says Christ, is cast forth. That is, he is cast out of all the privileges he formerly enjoyed, and the last state of such a man is worse than the first.

Therefore, when our Saviour says, Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out; he is to be understood of that gracious and impartial reception which he gives to returning sinners, without having any reference to Final Perseverance. Or if it be understood as a promise of Final Perseverance, it must be taken in connexion with other passages, where the terms of continuance in the divine favour are plainly stated. To the Jews it was said, The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. But if they understood this to require no condition to be fulfilled on their part, they were greatly deceived. For to the same people it was said, I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim. This was because they did not do what was commanded them; when the Almighty said, Obey my voice, and I will be your God and ye shall be my people. On the fulfilment of this condition depended the fulfilment of the promises. So in

every gospel promise there is always a condition either expressed or implied. In sense and meaning they all correspond with this declaration; Be thou faithful to death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

The next passage cited by our author is, He that believeth shall be saved: from which he concludes, that as every Christian has believed, every Christian will be saved. By this kind of logic we may prove, that no man can be saved. For it is declared, that he that believeth not shall be damned; and we are told that God has concluded all in unbelief; from which we may infer, that all must perish. But if we suffer the Scripture to explain itself, we shall find, that a man no longer continues under that dreadful sentence, than while he continues in unbelief; and the former words require a similar explanation. We are saved by faith, with a present salvation; and if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end, we shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. Hence we are to continue grounded and settled, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel; by giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure; and in due time we shall reap if we faint not. In the trying hour, the love of many may wax cold; but he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.

The next passage cited by our author is, My sheep hear my voice, &c. This shews that Christ's faithful followers will be protected here and rewarded hereafter; but there is nothing here stated to lead us to conclude that believers cannot fall finally, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit. Because the Christian's character and his privilege are here connected; and it is only while we sustain the former, that we are entitled to the latter. This passage in signification corresponds with that noticed before, He that believeth shall be saved; which entitles no man to salvation, any longer than while he continues to believe. So if we cease to hearken to the voice of Christ and follow him, we forfeit the promise he makes to his sheep. But so long as we hear his voice and follow him, none of our enemies will be able to pluck us out of his hand; for who is he that will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good? He that walks uprightly walks surely. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that has loved us.

But if we suppose that we cannot disobey the voice of Christ, or that we are perfectly safe in our disobedience, we fill our minds with dangerous delusions, against which the Scripture faithfully warns us, when it says, Be not deceived; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, and he that committeth sin is of the devil. This is very far from saying, that we continue to be the sheep of Christ, whatever sin we commit. His servants ye are whom ye obey; his servants whom ye obey at the present, whose servants soever ye have been before. When St. Paul was speaking to the sheep of Christ, he said, If ye fulfil the lusts of the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. By such a declaration as this, we are furnished with a perpetual and powerful motive for the government of our passions, and the regulation of our

lives. But when it is asserted, that no sin can endanger the salvation of God's people, every inducement to self-denial is counteracted, and every motive to morality destroyed.

The next promise which the Dr. brings to prove perseverance is this, I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved. The answer we have given to the last passage but one applies equally to this. At present therefore it is only needful to observe, that the term saved in Scripture is applied to believers, and the term lost to unbelievers; but during the present life, neither of them denotes an unchangeable state; as the Apostle informs us in the eleventh chapter of his epistle to the Romans, where he declares that those in a lost state will be saved, if they continue not in unbelief; and those saved by faith, if they continue not in goodness, will be cut off.

The next promise pleaded in defence of perseverance is, Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What requires our notice on this passage, in the first place, is the comment which the Dr. has given. He tells us, as a promise it is both unconditional and universal. But though he declares it to be universal, he supposes all mankind, except the elect, are excluded from it. Except to a select few, it is not designed to confer any benefit, nor produce any other effect, than to excite hopes which cannot be realized, and raise expectations which are sure to be disappointed. Such are the gloomy, partial, discouraging promises, which Calvinists call universal. They tend to produce universal despondency, because none are interested in them but the elect, and no man living can tell whether he is elected. The gospel according to Calvinism is, He that is elected shall be saved; and he that is not elected shall be damned. This decree of election passed before men came into the world, without any respect to their actions or dispositions. Any universal promise, founded on such a scheme, ought to excite universal disgust and indignation.

We are told that the promise under consideration is unconditional, but how does this appear? A condition is often implied where it is not expressed, if this was not the case, the Scripture would have to abound with perpetual repetition. But if the Holy Ghost does not repeat on every occasion, what he has elsewhere plainly and fully established, we are not to suppose that he contradicts himself, or that he abrogates what he does not repeat. If all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, no sense of a passage, which does not agree with the whole Scripture, can be the meaning of the Holy Ghost. And since many promises are unconditionally expressed, where a condition is indisputably implied, we ask, what proof is there that this is not the case in the passage before us?

If the promises of eternal life are unconditional, all the threatenings and admonitions, commands and exhortations, are vain and useless. We may exhort men to flee from sin, to watch and pray, to deny themselves of all ungodliness, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present evil world, but all the while we fight as them that beat the air; for our hearers are supposed to know, that

the promises of heaven are unconditional, that no sin can endanger the salvation of the elect, nor any thing save any of the rest. When we tell men that the promises of heaven are unconditional, we tell them in effect to live as they please, so long as they can, and to disregard every other rule of conduct.

Solomon indeed tells men to live as they please, but at the same time adds, Know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Like a skilful apothecary he mingled poison in the compound so as to make it a restorative to health. But those who declare the promises of heaven to be unconditional, administer poison without an antidote. Why Solomon acted otherwise may be accounted for, from the prejudice of his education. David had said, Thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; if thou seek him he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off for ever. But though David spoke in this manner, he must have remembered promises where no condition was expressed. For it had been said, Tell my servant David, thus saith the Lord, when thy days are fulfilled, I will set up thy seed, and will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish his kingdom for ever; my mercy shall not depart from him. 2 Sam. vii. 5, &c. Respecting these promises, David says, The rock of Israel spake with me. He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, well ordered in all things and sure. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3—5. It was well ordered in all things and sure as to the real intent and meaning of it. But as to the meaning of it, it will be found upon proper enquiry, that where a condition is not expressed, there is one implied; as David would learn from other parts of God's word; as from his message to Eli, Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 1 Sam. ii. 30. By this it appears that in the promise made to Eli, a condition was implied when it was not expressed; and on this ground, David, notwithstanding all the absolute promises he had received, saw it proper to state to Solomon, that if he sought the Lord he would be found of him, but if he forsook him he would cast him off for ever. So with respect to our salvation, many promises are made where no condition is expressed, but not one where a condition is not implied, if this be not admitted, we establish every Antinomian delusion, and reduce divine revelation to a mass of absurdities and palpable contradictions.

"In the most express terms" says the Dr. "it is asserted that every one who is effectually called, is justified and will in the end be glorified." If this is the case, it is no wonder he thought that this passage ought to end the controversy. But how could he expect the reader to take his word in opposition to his own senses. No such thing is expressed either in this passage or any other. An effectual call and a common call are frequently spoken of in Calvinistic writings; but never in the word of God. An effectual call we are

told is one that cannot be resisted, and a common call one that cannot be obeyed; the former is given to the elect, and the latter to the non-elect. But such notions can neither be found in the scripture nor reconciled with the perfections of God. The Almighty says, Because I have called and ye have refused, I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. But according to the doctrine of our opponents, he had only employed a common call, which could not be obeyed, and consequently a call which could only be intended to increase their condemnation. If an effectual call is given to some which of necessity always answers the purpose, it is evident that the Almighty would give the call to more, if he wished more to be saved; and if he does not wish more to be saved, he must wish all the rest to be damned, whatever he has said or sworn to the contrary, and unless we will receive such blasphemies for articles of faith, we must renounce the Calvinistic distinction between common and effectual calls.

It is expressly said, observes our author, that all who are justified will be glorified in the end. But the apostle says no such thing, he says they are glorified already; and therefore their being glorified, is not to be understood in this passage of their future felicity, but of their present privileges. To the Jews belonged the adoption and the glory; and Christians are more highly favoured by the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Hence our Saviour says to the Father, The glory which thou givest me, have I given them. And St. Peter speaks of the spirit of glory resting on such as had embraced the gospel.

The Christian fathers understood the term glorified in this passage to relate to the privileges of the gospel, which might be forfeited; but Calvinists depart from the sense of antiquity, and change the apostle's expression into the future tense, to make it correspond with their own notions. After all, they must allow, that there is something implied which is not expressed, or otherwise men may be justified without faith. We can only prove that faith is requisite, by having recourse to other passages, and by the same means we can prove, that none will be finally saved but such as continue in the faith; and from this faith it is possible to fall away.

If it be pleaded, that all who are called are justified, we reply, that the term justified does not always denote the pardon of sins, but is used for any expressed or evident approbation, as where it is said, Wisdom is justified of her children. To understand what the apostle means by it in this place, we must consider the drift of his argument, and the scope of his discourse. He was replying to Jewish objections against Christianity. Christians were then condemned by the Jews, because they were not circumcised, and did not observe the law of Moses. But though they were condemned by the Jews, the apostle declares they were justified by the Almighty; that is, God approved of their religious system which the Jews reprobated.

But if it be contended that the term justified, in this passage, signifies the pardon of sin; then, in this case, when the apostle says, Whom he called, them he also justified,—he can only be understood

of such as have obeyed, from the heart, the call that has been given; otherwise, he would contradict our Saviour, who says, Many are called, but few are chosen. Consequently, some are called, who are not, in the highest sense of the word, justified. And if we are under the necessity of understanding the apostle in this qualified sense, with respect to such as will be finally justified, we may do the same with respect to such as will be finally glorified. We are to understand him of such as continue in the faith grounded and settled, and who are not moved away from the hope of the gospel.

When the apostle declared that the Romans were predestinated, called, justified, and glorified, he is not to be understood of any unconditional election to eternal life, but of a gratuitous appointment to gospel privileges, which might be forfeited by unbelief and disobedience. That he is not to be understood of unconditional Election to heaven, is manifest, because, in answer to the Jews, who maintained that none could be saved unless they kept the law of Moses, the drift of his discourse was to prove, that salvation was to be obtained by faith in Christ, and not by the deeds of law. But he could not prove this by unconditional Election to heaven. For if such an election existed, men would be as safe when they opposed the gospel, as when they believed it; and it was needless to contend for either the law or the gospel. The heart's desire and prayer to God of the apostle were, that Israel might be saved; to accomplish this purpose, he warned them night and day, with tears, at the peril of his life; which is a most evident proof, that he knew nothing of such an election as our opponents contend for.

When the apostle uses the words, predestinate, called, justified, and glorified, he uses them of the whole Church; but he never supposed it to be certain that they would all be eternally saved; and therefore could not use these words for an unconditional Election to eternal life. All the expressions here used, or words of the same import, were employed with reference to the Jewish Church, which actually fell away. The same expressions, therefore, when used with respect to Christians, cannot prove that they may not likewise fall away. That the apostle did not, by these expressions, intend to describe any privileges which could not be forfeited, is evident from what he says in the same epistle. Speaking to the Christian Church respecting the fall of the Jews, he says, Because of unbelief, they were broken off; and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness; if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. Thus St. Paul has declared his own views concerning this subject, in a manner which one would expect to terminate the controversy; for those who are predestinated, called, justified, &c. are liable to fall away.

10. "I shall now proceed," says the Dr., "to consider the principal objections against the perseverance of Christians. 1st. It is objected, that this doctrine is inconsistent with Free Agency." On

this new ground, the Dr. has the advantage of selecting such objections as he pleases to attack, and of placing them the most advantageously for refutation, as he leaves out all the arguments by which they have been supported. How he succeeds with these advantages on his side, we are now to consider. We are of opinion, that the doctrine of Perseverance, as held by Calvinists, will be found liable to this objection, that it is inconsistent with the free agency of man. Those who hold Final Perseverance, maintain, that saints cannot possibly do otherwise; that they are under the influence of irresistible grace; and if men are constrained and compelled to act in any certain way, they do not appear to be free to do otherwise. It is commonly allowed, that necessity and freedom of action are two opposites, which can no more unite, than two parallel lines can meet in one common centre. Whether our author has discovered the method of reconciling these two opposites together, is what we must see, before we can believe. To be free, is to have the power to act without restraint or compulsion; it relates to what we can either do or leave undone. Every creature is dependant, and cannot be free in every respect. But though a man's liberty is necessarily circumscribed, yet he may be free in some respects. That the objection may not be taken for more than is intended, it is to be observed, that it does not deny that man, on the principle contended for, is wholly destitute of freedom; but only as it respects the subject under consideration. If it be proved, that the elect are so under the influence of irresistible grace, that they cannot fall away, the objection does not deny them to be free in other respects; they may be free enough to commit flagrant crimes, such as adultery and murder. If the Dr., therefore, can prove, that the elect, on their principles, are free in many respects; unless he can shew that they are so with respect to perseverance, he only evades, he does not answer the objection. As eternal life is promised to perseverance, and eternal death threatened against falling away; it is natural to infer, that man is free to do one or the other; and if it is not found to be otherwise, the objection remains in full force. It may be needful to remark, that there is a difference between being willing and being free. A man may do that voluntarily which he does of necessity; but what he cannot leave undone, he does not do freely. Having thus stated the meaning of the objection, let us see how the Dr. proceeds to answer it. "The drift," he says, "of the objection, in every case, is against the doctrine, that God can create a free agent, who yet shall be a holy being. If he can create such an agent, and make him holy from the beginning; he can, undoubtedly, with equal ease and equal consistency, render such an agent holy after he is created. But it cannot be scripturally denied, that our first parents, or the angels, were created holy; nor that the man Christ Jesus was created holy. Nor can it be denied, that all these were in the fullest sense free agents. The very acknowledgement that they were holy, is an acknowledgement that they were free agents; for holiness is an attribute of free agents only. It is certain, then, that God can render

such agents holy at any time after they are created, without infringing at all on the freedom of their agency. In other words, he can regenerate them; can sanctify them afterwards, at successive periods; and can, of course, continually increase their holiness to the end of their lives.

"Further: Angels and glorified saints will persevere in holiness throughout eternity; and their perseverance is rendered absolutely certain by the unchangeable promise of God. Yet neither this perseverance, nor the certainty of it, will at all diminish the freedom of their agency. The perseverance of saints in this world may, therefore, exist to the end of life, and may be absolutely certain, without any diminution of the freedom of their agency."

The Dr. here employs the abstruse and intricate arguments of his grand father, President Edwards; which may sometimes enable a subtile disputant to make his escape from the force of truth, by involving the subject in darkness and perplexity. If he was able to shew that some injudicious objections have been made against his opinion, it would not prove that his opinion itself was true. But his arguments require our consideration. He tells us, in the first place, that the objection is against the doctrine that God can create a free agent, who shall yet be a holy being. Here he loses his way at his first setting out. The objection is not intended to prove, that a free agent may not be holy, and continue in holiness; but only that it is possible for him to cease to be holy.

His next argument, that as God can create a free agent holy, he can render him holy after he is created, is as little to the purpose as the former. Those agents created holy cannot be rendered holy afterwards, unless they have fallen from the holiness in which they were created; and if their second holiness is the same as the first, their former relapse shews the possibility of a second. The holiness in which an agent is created relates to capacity and disposition; but rewardable holiness relates to actions; and in this kind of holiness we cannot be free, unless we have a power to act otherwise than we do. We are not to attribute to divine power what involves a contradiction, as it undoubtedly does, to suppose that a man may be made free and not free, at the same time, and in the same respect.

We are told that Jesus Christ was both holy and free; to which we reply, that the objection does not deny that men may be so likewise. But if this is meant to prove, that as Christ was free and yet could not cease to be holy, therefore men may be holy and free without a possibility of falling away, we deny the conclusion. Man may deviate from his conformity to the divine Being, but the divine Being cannot deviate from himself; he cannot choose to be any thing but what he is, he is immutable in all his perfections, he is not free to change his attributes; and as Christ possessed all the fulness of the Godhead, he must be the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. The divine immutability rendered him not free to deviate from holiness. But this does not prove man to be immutable in holiness, and if man, or any other being, be immutable in holiness, he is not free to commit sin.

We are further told, that both our first parents, and angels were created both holy and free. This we admit; but when they were free, they fell from their happy state; and surely this does not prove that we cannot fall. The Dr. is here so bewildered in his metaphysics, that he overturns his own positions. "The very acknowledgement, that they were holy," he says, "is an acknowledgement that they were free agents; for holiness is an attribute of free agents only." To this we reply, that a man may be holy, without possessing the attribute of immutable holiness. And if a man cannot be holy without being free, no man can be holy on Calvinistic principles; for on these principles, a man is under the necessity of acting in all respects as he does, by an eternal decree of Jehovah. Those Calvinists who choose to take up the subject after the fall of man, and who endeavour to conceal every thing but the bright side of their system, leave man no liberty with respect to the holiness of his conduct; for they maintain, that all those actions which please God are the result of a supernatural and irresistible agency; and such cannot be a man's own actions; while a divine power compels him to act; he cannot be free, nor perform any rewardable holiness. On such principles, no man can have any holiness which will meet with a recompense of reward.

Without infringing on their freedom, says the Dr., God "can increase their holiness to the end of their lives." To this we reply, that it is not our concern to inquire what God can do, but what is his purpose to do; and what this is, we learn from his word, which declares, that in our present state, we are on trial for a future state, with life and death set before us, a blessing and a curse. But if God proposes to do for us what Calvinists suppose, namely, to preserve us in holiness by an invincible power; then we are not free, because we cannot do otherwise than as we do. That God is able to increase our holiness to the end of our lives, without infringing on our freedom, we do not deny; but we have no reason to believe that we shall be made more holy than Adam was before his fall; and if not, it cannot be any degree of holiness we may possess that can render it impossible for us to fall away.

We are further told, that angels and glorified saints are free, and yet will persevere; from this it is inferred, that saints may be free, and yet their perseverance may be absolutely certain. To this we reply, that what is impossible under some circumstances, may be possible under others. The perseverance of our first parent might have been absolutely certain, had he been placed out of the reach of temptation. Angels and glorified spirits are in such a situation, and may therefore be in no danger of falling away; but their security is not a proof of ours. The promises and threatenings held out to excite our hopes and fears, shew that we are not in the same situation. If it be impossible for angels and glorified spirits to fall away, it is because it is impossible for them to sin; and when it can be proved that we cannot sin, it may be proved that we cannot fall away; but never till then. If we are liable to sin, and not to fall away, we must be under the control of a superior power, which does not leave us

free with respect to perseverance; and such a perseverance cannot be rewarded. The objection, therefore, remains in full force, and the light of truth breaks through that metaphysical mist by which it had been obscured.

11. With respect to the next objection, the Dr. says, "2dly. It is alleged, that the Scriptures promise eternal life to Christians, unconditionally; and that this is inconsistent with the supposition, that every Christian will persevere in holiness. For example; He, that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved: and again, For we are made partakers with Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.

"There are many passages of this nature in the new Testament. As the import of them all is exactly the same, it will be unnecessary to quote any more. Their universal tenour, whether given in the form of promises, cautions, exhortations, or commands, is this, that eternal life will not be allotted to any of mankind, except those who continue in obedience unto the end. Hence it is argued, that a discrimination is here intentionally made between such Christians as do, and such as do not thus continue in their obedience. Otherwise, it is observed, the condition would be useless, and without any foundation in fact. To this I answer, first, that a conditional promise, collateral to an absolute one, can never affect, much less make void, the absolute promise. The promises, which I have recited, of eternal life to every Christian, are all absolute; as are also many others of the same nature, They cannot, therefore, be made void by these conditional ones. At the same time, all these conditional promises and exhortations are, and were intended to be, powerful means of the very perseverance, which is the principal subject of them. We are not constrained or forced to persevere; nor should we persevere, were we wholly left to ourselves. Our perseverance is owing to two great causes, the influence of the Spirit, and the means furnished in the word, ordinances, and providences of God. Among these means, the very condition, here suggested in so many impressive forms, is of high importance, and has contributed to the perseverance of Christians in holiness, ever since the Scriptures were published. Although, therefore, all Christians actually thus persevere; yet it is not improbable, that without the aid of those passages of Scripture here alluded to, multitudes might have fallen away."

What the Dr. here advances, is of great importance, because it relates to the exposition of innumerable passages of Scripture, which, when rightly understood, may make us wise unto salvation. He admits, that all the passages alluded to are of some use; but this can only be so far as they are believed to contradict the principles for which he contends. It is allowed, that there are many conditional promises; but these, he says, cannot affect, much less make void, the absolute promises. But it is equally true, that the absolute promises can never make the conditional ones void. The conditional promises do not indeed make the absolute ones void; but they point out their signification. Otherwise these conditional promises are void of all sense and utility. In one place, Christ makes an absolute

promise of eternal life; in another place, he says, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Here the latter promise explains what is meant by the former.

God's purpose respecting the punishment of the wicked, is often expressed in the most absolute manner, without the mention of any condition; as, The soul that sinneth, it shall die. He that believeth not shall be damned. But these threatenings are explained, when it is said, Let the wicked forsake his way; and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and unto our God, and he will abundantly pardon. But it might be pleaded, with equal strength, or more properly with equal weakness of argument, that a conditional threatening, collateral to an absolute one, can never affect, much less make void, the absolute threatening. Such logic employed on the threatenings, leads to despair; and when employed on the promises, it leads to presumption.

Roman Catholics take absolute promises and leave out the implied conditions, when they maintain the infallibility of their Church. It may be pointed out to them how much they have departed from the word of God; how different their creeds and forms of worship have been at one period, to what they are at another; how one counsel has condemned what another has established; how rival Popes have excommunicated each other; how many different opinions prevail among them, and how the blackest crimes have been committed by the authority of their Church. Yet still they plead they cannot err, for they have the promise of being guided into all truth. And by a similar fallacy of argument, Calvinists plead the absolute promises of eternal life, as a proof of perseverance. If the arguments they use on the subject prove what they intend, they will prove that the Church of Rome cannot err; and if that Church cannot err, no Protestant can be saved; and therefore, if these arguments are not fallacious, those who employ them are in a deplorable condition.

The Jewish Church had many absolute promises, both of temporal and spiritual mercies. These promises declared that God would put his law into their hearts, and cause them to walk in his statutes; that they might no more depart from him; that they should inherit the land for ever; that the Lord would not cast off his people; the mountains might depart, but his loving kindness should not be removed. But their subsequent fall and rejection shew that these promises, however absolutely expressed, were conditional in signification; and if the Jews did not understand them so at the time they were given, they must have paid little regard to other parts of God's word, which so plainly declared that their iniquities might separate them from God, and cause them to be utterly forsaken and abhorred. That both the threatenings and the promises are to be understood conditionally, in whatever manner they are expressed, appears from the eighteenth of Jeremiah, where the prophet says, The word of the Lord came to me saying; at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, to pluck up, and pull down, and to destroy it. If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will

repent of the evil which I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. But to all this it might have been replied, that conditional promises and threatenings, collateral to such as are absolute, could not affect, much less make void the absolute declarations. The Jews seem to have been of this opinion, and the consequence was, that they perished in their own delusions.

Though the conditional promises cannot affect such as are absolute, the Dr. is of opinion that they are useful; they have contributed, he says, to the perseverance of Christians in holiness ever since the Scriptures were published. But we are not to expect him to reconcile this to the other parts of his system. On the principle he contends for, believers were as absolutely certain to persevere before the Scriptures were published, as they have been since; and they would have persevered in the same manner they now do, if the Scriptures had never been published at all. How the Scriptures therefore can contribute so much to perseverance, by conditional promises, is utterly inexplicable.

"All Christians," says the Dr. "persevere; yet it is not improbable, that without the aid of those passages of Scripture here alluded to, multitudes might have fallen away." If so, what becomes of all his other arguments for perseverance? He has told us that perseverance follows irresistibly from Election; that it stands immoveably fixed on the divine immutability; that it is rendered infallibly certain by positive declarations and absolute promises. But now we are told that multitudes of Christians might have fallen away, had it not been prevented by conditional promises. If conditional promises contribute so much to perseverance, we might suppose that some thing depended on fulfilling the conditions; but this is so far from being the case, that no sin can endanger the salvation of the elect. Perseverance is greatly promoted and firmly secured by having conditional promises in the Bible, but the open and wilful violation of these conditions, can neither prevent its completion, nor retard its progress. Because it is written, If ye keep my commandments, ye shall be my people and I will be your God, multitudes of Christians are prevented from falling away; but the breach of these commands cannot cause any to fall away. This is a specimen of Calvinistic consistency.

What makes such promises contribute to perseverance is, in the Dr's. opinion, because they are delivered "in so many impressive forms." And we admit that they are as impressive as they possibly can be made by the hope of heaven and the fear of hell. But on whom can these impressive forms make any impression? if on those who believe they cannot fall away, then they must believe and disbelieve the same thing in the same moment of time. Whenever a conditional promise produces a practical effect, it is when it is believed that the promised blessing may be lost by not fulfilling the condition. But when those who are unconditionally elected to

heaven believe this, they believe a lie, and the belief of this falsehood stimulates them to holiness, when a belief of the truth would produce an opposite effect. And we are to suppose that the Almighty desires them to believe this untruth, and at the same time lets them know it is an untruth. And by believing this untruth, while they know it to be such, they are saved; but had they only believed the simple truth, they would have been damned. Such are the sentiments of this great advocate of Final Perseverance; who establishes his doctrine on unconditional Election and absolute promises, which cannot be affected by conditional promises, and after all tells us that had it not been for conditional promises, multitudes of Christians might have fallen away.

If conditional promises prevent multitudes from falling away, we ought not to use means to have them disregarded. But while we maintain that perseverance irresistibly follows from Election, and that no sin can endanger the salvation of the elect, we teach men the most effectually to disregard the conditions on which eternal life is promised. The Scripture informs us that those who do not continue in the faith shall be cut off; their names shall be blotted out from the book of life; but the doctrine of perseverance teaches that these things cannot possibly happen to any Christian, notwithstanding the most enormous sins he can commit: from this it follows, that the threatenings to the elect are only so many scare-crows, which can produce no effect after the deception is discovered.

12. Our author proceeds to state, "3dly. It is objected, that this doctrine naturally contributes to lessen the diligence of the Christian in his duty. For an answer to this objection I must refer you to a former discourse on Justification by Faith." The answer here referred to will be found in sermon sixty-nine. The Dr. seems to exert himself to answer this objection more than any other, and to dwell upon it with peculiar complacency and self-satisfaction; like one who is confident of success, and sees an opportunity presented of striking a decisive blow, for which he had been long anxious. This might induce him to answer the objection before it came on in its regular course, in a former subject, with which it had no connection. His answer will be a longer quotation than I should like to give, but the reader may desire to see all that can be advanced on such an interesting question, by so great a philosopher and divine, when he puts forth all his strength on a favourite topic. His answer is as follows.—

"But it will be said, that those, who hold the doctrine of justification by faith, hold, also, that of Final Perseverance of Saints; and by consequence deny, that the penalty of the law will ever be executed on any of those, who become the subjects of faith. As this is fairly said, because it is said with truth; particularly, so far as I am concerned; I feel myself bound to give it a fair consideration.

"Let it be observed then, that the security, which those, who are the subjects of faith, possess of eternal life, is not, in my view, connected with the first act of faith, in this manner; that they are the subjects of this single act of faith, and will afterwards be the subjects

of habitual and characteristical disobedience, but in this manner; that, having once exercised faith, they will continue, henceforth, to practise an habitual and characteristical obedience, to the end of life. If a man abide not in me, saith our Saviour, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire; and they are burned. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end. In every one of these passages, the doctrine, which I have specified, is declared in terms, so plain and unequivocal as to need no comment. I shall only add one more, although multitudes might be easily added. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away. If St. Paul, whose words these are, felt himself in any manner, exposed to be cast away, and considered it as absolutely necessary to make these efforts, in order to avoid this dreadful evil; and the spirit of truth dictated to him this doctrine, and this conduct; nothing can be necessary to prove, that all other Christians are, at least in an equal degree, exposed to the same evil, and need the same means to ensure their escape.

"The perseverance of Christians is, in my own view, completely secured by the promise of God; but it is not secured by any compulsory, or coercive, act of almighty power. It is accomplished, by means, and motives, employed for this purpose, and rendered effectual by their own efforts, and the sanctifying energy of the Divine Spirit. If they were not to act, means would be furnished, and motives addressed to them, in vain. If they were not aided by the energy of the Divine Spirit, their efforts would be ineffectual.

"The providence, word, and ordinances of God, are these means. Among the motives, addressed to them for this purpose, are the promises of the gospel, and the threatenings of the law; by which I intend every thing contained in the word of God, calculated either to encourage, or to alarm. The promises assure the Christian, that he shall persevere; but they do not assure him of this blessing on the supposition, that he ceases to obey, and yields himself again a servant to corruption. On the contrary, they make it secure to him, conditionally, in this sense; that he never turns back, and refuses, or neglects, to walk any more with Christ, that on the contrary, he yields himself a living sacrifice to God, and henceforth walks in newness of life; not perfectly, but habitually, and perseveringly, unto the end. At the same time, they give him certain assurance, that, by the grace of God, he will be enabled thus to persevere. The threatenings, on the other hand, continually hold out to him the most awful denunciations against apostacy; the most solemn alarms concerning sloth, worldliness, and backsliding; and the most terrifying assurance, that, if he does not endure in his duty to the end, in the manner specified, he cannot be saved. Thus, while the event is made certain on the one hand, the means are made indispensable

to it on the other. A well known passage of Scripture sufficiently illustrates this position. The Angel of the Lord assured Paul, that no one of his companions in the ship should perish. Yet Paul afterwards declared to the Centurion, and to the soldiers, that except the seamen abode in the ship, they could not be saved. In this part of the subject, thus explained, it will, I think, be impossible to find any thing which lessens, in the view of a Christian, his motives to obedience.

"In the mean time, it is to be remembered, the Christian is very rarely assured of his own salvation, because he is very rarely assured that he is a Christian. Did he know, from the commencement of his Christianity, that he was certainly a Christian; I freely confess, that, in my view, he would, in ordinary cases, be in no small danger of the evils intended in this objection. In the infant state of Christianity in the mind, there is usually so little religious knowledge, so little strength of affection, so infirm a state of virtuous habits, and, consequently, so little stability of religious character; while there is also much remaining sin, so riveted a predominance of evil habits, and so imperfect a prevalence of divine grace over them; that this interesting discovery might, in my own view, prove, in no small degree, detrimental to him, by producing in his mind a dangerous quiet, and a mischievous, if not a fatal security.

"Such, however is not the fact. The state of the Christian, either by the nature of things, or by the divine constitution, or by both, is such, that in ordinary cases, though, I acknowledge, not always, the evidence which he possesses of being a Christian, is in a good measure proportioned to the degree of his Christianity. When religion is feeble in the mind; when it is interrupted; when it is intruded upon by passion, appetite, temptation, care, error, or perplexity; its proofs become of course few, scattered, dim, and doubtful; and not unfrequently disappear. In the contrary circumstances, luminous seasons are enjoyed; evidences of grace multiply; and the soul is refreshed with alternations of hope, and peace, and joy. In his ordinary state, the utmost of which a Christian can boast, if I may rely upon the testimony of such Christians as I have conversed with, is a prevailing hope, or a comfortable persuasion, that he is a disciple of Christ. In this situation, the hope which he enjoys allures and encourages him to obedience; while it also prevents him from despondency. Numerous fears at the same time intervene, alarm him concerning the uncertainty of his condition, and compel him to new and more vigorous exertions for the performance of his duty. Thus he is preserved alike, from the dangers of both despondency and security; and is kept, so far as such a being can be supposed to be kept, in a progressive and improving course of obedience. His path is like the shining light, which, however dim and dusky, still shines more and more unto the perfect day.

"Whenever a Christian becomes possessed of the faith, or hope, of assurance; he is also so far advanced in virtue, that he is prepared to feel the influence of virtuous motives; to realize the glory and excellency of his Creator and Redeemer; the loveliness of virtuous

affections and conduct, and the hatefulness of sin; sufficiently to need little assistance from the influence of fear. Perfect love casteth out fear; and, in that state, a moral being is perfectly safe, without the aid of fear; perfectly inclined to do his duty; and perfectly guarded against the danger of backsliding. The assured Christian approximates towards this state; and is proportionally safe from the moral dangers of the present life.

"In like manner, the inhabitants of heaven are unalterably assured of their eternal perseverance in obedience; and in the same general manner are enabled to persevere. They love God too intensely, they delight too absolutely in virtuous conduct, they hate sin too cordially, and are too efficaciously influenced by the Spirit of grace, ever to forsake holiness, and relapse into sin. The assured Christian is chiefly kept alive in his obedience, in the same manner; he differs from them, principally, in the degree of his sanctification."

The Dr., in all this, has done so little towards removing the objection, that the reader will almost have forgotten what it is. We are here told, that the security which believers possess of eternal life, is, that having once exercised faith, they will continue to practise an habitual obedience to the end of life. If believers possess such security as this, they are secure enough: they may bid defiance to the gates of hell, without seeking any aid from either unconditional promises, or unconditional Election. But how does it appear, that any man possesses such security? Is it not admitted, on all hands, that believers may fall into sin, and continue for a course of years in a backsliding state? And if they may commit the greatest crimes with perfect safety, their security cannot consist in habitual obedience. If the security of believers be made to consist in habitual obedience, then, when they obey not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness, they must be in danger of being excluded from the kingdom of God, and this is all we contend for in our opposition to Final Perseverance. Let it once be proved, that believers are certain to yield habitual obedience, and we have no more to say on the subject.

All the Scriptures which the Dr. here brings forward, are so far from anwering the objection, that they completely refute the doctrine against which the objection is made. As a proof that the notion of Final Perseverance does not weaken our motives to diligence, he pleads that our Saviour has said, If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth, &c. To this we reply, that to be cast forth as a branch that is withered and is to be burnt, is indeed a most dreadful state; but before this awful declaration can have any effect on our conduct, we must believe that it is possible for such a thing to take place. But the doctrine our opponents contend for, supposes that such a case can never occur; and therefore, so far as this doctrine is believed, our Saviour's warning must be disregarded. For a man cannot both believe his perseverance to be infallibly certain, and that he is in danger of falling away. Our Saviour's declaration proves the doctrine contended for to be a delusion; but it can never prove, that the delusion will not weaken our motives to Christian diligence; and the same answer applies to all the passages he here brings forward.

The Dr. proceeds to notice another passage, where the apostle speaks of his self-denial, lest he should be cast away; on which he observes, "If St. Paul felt himself exposed to be finally cast away, and considered it necessary to make these efforts to avoid this dreadful evil, other Christians are exposed to the same evil, and need the same means to ensure their escape." All this is reasonable and true; but then it can never be reconciled with the doctrine contended for; because, if nothing can endanger the salvation of the elect, they are in no sense whatever exposed to be finally cast away. St. Paul's declaration can in no sense answer the objection, till we renounce the notion, that believers cannot finally fall, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit.

"If Christians," says the Dr., "were not to act, means would be furnished, and motives addressed to them in vain." But no person needs to be told so obvious a truth, and it is equally evident that the most effectual method of causing these motives to be addressed to them in vain, is to make people believe that their destiny is determined before they come into the world, and cannot afterwards be changed by any course of conduct whether good or bad; that one part of mankind cannot possibly forfeit their Election, and the other part cannot by any means obtain that privilege, Such a doctrine is totally subversive of all motives to Christian diligence.

"The promises," says our author, "assure the Christian, that he shall persevere; they make it secure to him, conditionally, in this sense that he walks perseveringly." But if the promises were so proposed, we should find it very difficult to ascertain their meaning; his embarrasment arises from a desire te reconcile things which are utterly irreconcileable, namely the conditional promises of Scripture, and their own notions of Final Perseverance. He likewise tells us that the promises do not assure the Christian that he shall persevere, "on the supposition, that he ceases to obey and yields himself again a servant of corruption." But though the promises do not, yet the doctrine he contends for does this. It maintains that David when he deliberately committed adultery and murder, did not endanger his salvation; and that it is impossible for any believer to endanger his salvation by the most enormous sins he may commit. Final Perseverance cannot be maintained on any other supposition, and therefore it must of necessity destroy all the influence of conditional promises, as motives to diligence.

He proceeds to say that "the threatenings continually hold out denunciations against apostacy; the most terrifying assurance, that if he does not endure in his duty to the end, he cannot be saved." But these threatenings are at such utter variance with the doctrine against which we contend, as manifestly to prove that both cannot come from God. They represent him as speaking in the Scriptures to the following purpose. "You that truly believe in my Son Jesus Christ, and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore fully persuaded in your own minds that you cannot possibly, by the most abominable sins you may commit, finally fall away from your faith; that in the midst of your foulest falls there remains

a seed of grace within you, which is sufficient to preserve you from falling away finally; that you know and are assured that I will, by an invincible power, work perseverance in you, and that heaven is already as good as yours. Yet you who are fully persuaded of the truth of this, I earnestly charge, admonish, exhort, and beseech, that you take heed to yourselves, that you continue in the faith, that you fall not from your stedfastness. Yea, I profess to you, that if you draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in you; that if you deny me, I will deny you; that if you turn away, all your former righteousness shall not be remembered, but you shall die in your sins, and suffer the vengeance of eternal fire."

"He that duly considers what a ridiculous incongruity there is between the one and the other, must doubtless be obliged to own, that one of them is not from God, nor according to his mind. For how preposterous it must be to threaten a man with suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, if he should not persevere, whom we have before encouraged to believe, that God will invincibly cause him to persevere."

The Dr. tells us, that "while the event is made certain on the one hand, the means are made indispensable on the other." But how is this to be understood? It is admitted, that the elect may fall into the vilest transgressions; from which it necessarily follows, on the principle contended for, either that these transgressions are consistent with the means of salvation, or that the means may be dispensed with for the gratification of our corrupt appetites, without any danger whatever; and in either case, we can have no motive to diligence, from either promises or threatenings. Our author, however, is of opinion, that a single passage of Scripture will illustrate his position. "The Angel of the Lord assured Paul, that no one of his companions should perish; yet Paul afterwards declared to the Centurion, and to the soldiers, that except the seamen abode in the ship, they could not be saved." This passage proves the reverse of the purpose for which it is quoted. The seamen might have left the ship, and in that case, they would have forfeited their promised protection. But when a Calvinist declares, except we abide in the path of duty, we cannot be saved, he overthrows his own system; for if the elect are not as safe when they neglect their duty as when they fulfil it, the doctrine contended for cannot be true. And the doctrine, which maintains, that no sin can endanger their salvation, most certainly takes away their motives to diligence.

The Dr. admits, that both the promises and threatenings might fail to produce diligence, if a man was not ignorant of the goodness of his state. "Did he know," he says, "from the commencement, that he was certainly a Christian, this interesting discovery might, in my own view, produce in his mind a dangerous quiet, if not a fatal security." That is, a Christian would be in more danger, if he knew he was in no danger at all. Others have declared ignorance the mother of devotion; now it is discovered to be the means of Christian security; and where ignorance is happiness, it is folly to be wise. This happy ignorance, it seems, is very generally diffused;

for we are told, that a Christian is very rarely assured that he is a Christian. But the very reverse of this would appear to be the case, from his remarks on 1 John iii. 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. On this passage he says, "Every Christian loves the brethren; and that from the moment he becomes a Christian. All Christians know this," namely, that they have passed from death unto life, "who know that they love the brethren." From this we might be led to conclude, that there are few Christians who do not know themselves to be such; it is evidently our author's design to make them know it; and why does he do this, if this knowledge is so dangerous and so likely to prove fatal?

While a Christian remains in an infirm state of virtuous habits, the Dr. admits, that he does not know that he will certainly persevere; if he did, this knowledge might be injurious to him; when he becomes more advanced in virtue, he thinks this knowledge may be safely imparted. But if a Christian can do without the knowledge, till he has surmounted the greatest of his difficulties, he might certainly do without it to the end of his journey. Why then is the Dr. so anxious to publish it to the world? especially as the far greater number of Christians are in such a state, that the discovery to them might be very dangerous, if not fatal.

When the Dr. supposes that the doctrine in question cannot injure those who do not know themselves to be Christians, he is quite mistaken; for in this case it is most likely to prove injurious, for the strong are not so likely to be overcome as the weak; the more men love God and hate sin, the less liable they are to relax in their duty, by any supposed security of their state. But when men are in an infirm state of virtuous habits, they are more likely to be led astray by any doctrine which weakens their motives to diligence, as the doctrine under consideration does, whether men know themselves to be Christians or not. But our author is of opinion, that when a man does not know himself to be a Christian, numerous fears alarm him concerning the uncertainty of his condition, and compel him to new and more vigorous exertions for the performance of duty. But this cannot possibly be the case, unless we suppose that our state may be changed either for the better or the worse, according to our conduct. And the doctrine of Final Perseverance divides mankind into two classes, one of which cannot be saved by any exertions they can make, and the other cannot be lost by any negligence they can practise. The decree of Election is supposed to have passed before men came into the world, which fixes the destiny of every individual; the elect cannot by any means forfeit their privilege, and the non-elect cannot possibly obtain it. On this principle whatever fears a man may have about his state, he must see that his best endeavours must be totally useless. He has therefore no motive to diligence.*

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* The following account is taken from a very curious treatise, lately published by Dr. Lawrence, from a MS. in the Bodleian Library, entitled, "Authentic Documents relative to the Predestinarian Controversy which

13. " It is objected 4thly," says the Dr., " that several passages of Scripture teach the contrary doctrine. Among these is Heb. vi. 4—8. For it is impossible for those, who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift; and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance. &c. It will be unnecessary here for me to determine, who are the the persons meant by the apostle. He himself has decided they are not Christians. Their character is fully expressed in the eighth verse, under the image of the earth which beareth thorns

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took place among those who were imprisoned for their adherence to the reformation, by Queen Mary." Bradford was the advocate for that doctrine, which afterwards received the name of Calvinism, and Trewe was a principal person of the opposite persuasion. The narrative of the latter is a highly interesting document, written in a spirit of charity and meekness, and throws much light upon the history of these opinions. Speaking of the origin of the dispute, he says, " They did give such occasion of evil and offence to the weak, by their using of gaming, that we could do no less but gently admonish them to leave it, and to exhort them after the Scriptures to redeem the time, seeing the days are evil, and to leave such vain things, and to mourn with us, that did mourn for the great misery that is fallen on this land, and for the lamentable perplexity that many of our weak brethren (that were not able to bear the cross) were in, and to watch and pray continually, and strengthen us and our brethren in his truth to stand, that our lives and death might glorify his holy name. With the which they were not content, but defended it by the Scriptures; and because we would not give them place, but disproved them by word, they were somewhat displeased with us; insomuch that in process of time they began to pick out matter against us, and as we did use abstinence and prayer, they reported us to be justifiers of our selves, and such like; to the which we answered, that our justification came by faith in Christ's death. After other talk, in conclusion they did affirm, that none of them that God ordained to be saved could be driven from him by persecution, nor yet by any other occasion or means. For all such as shall be saved (say they) were elect and predestinate thereunto before the foundation of the world was laid, and none of them can be damned, do what wickedness they can. When pressed with those passages of Scripture, which denounce God's wrath and damnation against those that wilfully sin against him, these sentences, said they, are written to put the elect in fear to do evil, that their lives might glorify their Father which is in heaven, and not to put them in fear of damnation. By this, in effect, they affirmed those Scriptures to be written in vain, or to put them in fear where no fear is, affirming in effect, that the words of the Holy Ghost doeth no more good, than a man of clouts with a bow in his hand doeth in a corn field, which will keep away the vermin crows awhile, but when they know what it is, they will fall down besides it and devour the corn without fear." Trewe sums up his objections to the doctrine of predestination in twenty-three propositions, which he calls enormities. The eighteenth enormity is, it giveth occasion to neglect prayer, in that it affirmeth, contrary to Scripture, that all such as were predestinated before the foundation of the world was laid, must of necessity be saved, therefore they need not pray for it, and the residue must of necessity be damned, and prayer will not help them.—*British Review.*

and briers; while that of Christians is expressed in the seventh verse, under the image of the earth, which bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed. Secondly, It is not asserted by the apostle, that those of whom he speaks, ever actually fall away. The cause is stated only in the form of a supposition, whether such persons do in fact fall away is, therefore, left uncertain."

Our author has here recourse to two separate arguments; and when they are anything good for, two are better than one; but when they cannot both be brought to bear upon the point together, and when they are found mutually to oppose and weaken each other, then two are worse than one; and this is the case in the present instance. The former argument supposes the apostle to be speaking of mere nominal Christians, who are under the necessity of falling away; the latter argument supposes him to be speaking of real Christians who cannot fall away by any means; but these cannot both be true; and as far as the former is pressed into the service, the latter is overthrown; and so far as the latter is urged, the former is destroyed. When a man makes use of arguments which are at irreconcileable variance with each other, it shews the indecision of his own mind on the subject, and the great embarrasment in which he is involved. And as he cannot with any shadow of reason urge them both in his favour, until he has made his election, he does not deserve a reply. But as some may be inclined to take the one and some the other, we may give a glance at them both.

His first argument is, that the apostle has decided the persons spoken of are no Christians, because they are compared to the earth which beareth thorns and briers. To this we reply, that we do not suppose them to be Christians after their total apostacy from Christianity. But if they were not Christians previous to their apostacy, what had they to fall away from? and what could be the apostle's design in making such awful declarations respecting them? He is speaking to no purpose in the world, if he is warningthose who cannot fall, by the example of those who could not stand. That those who cannot fall away need any warning, would be very difficult to prove. But if warning be needful, how is it to be obtained from the example of such as were under the necessity of falling away.

Those who fell away, we are told, could not be Christians, because they are compared to the earth which bringeth forth thorns and briers; whereas Christians are compared to fruitful ground. To this we reply, that these emblems set forth the state which those persons were in at the time the apostle wrote; but this does not shew that their state was not very different at a former period. Those spoken of under the emblem of fruitful ground, were once in a state of barrenness; they were walking according to the course of this world, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others. And though in their present state they bring forth the fruits of unrighteousness; yet, according to St. Peter, it is only by giving all diligence, that they can be preserved from unfruitfulness. And if the apostle might properly describe their present state under the emblem of fruitful ground, notwithstanding their former barrenness, he might with

equal propriety speak of apostates under the emblem of the earth which bringeth forth thorns and briers, however fruitful they had been at a former period. From the figures which the apostle employs, it can never be reasonably inferred, that the wicked were never righteous, nor that the righteous may not become wicked; unless it can be proved, that barren ground can never be made fruitful, and that a fruitful soil can never become barren. The apostle, therefore, is very far from deciding, that the persons spoken of had never been Christians.

"But it cannot," says the Dr., "be rationally believed, that a doctrine of this importance would, in opposition to so many clear, decisive declarations, be left to expressions merely ambiguous." To this we reply, if this passage be understood to speak of believers who have fallen away, it will not oppose any other passage in the word of God, which has been subjected to acknowledged rules of interpretation; and with respect to the expressions being ambiguous, the same would have been said of any words the apostle could have used, by those who are determined to make the Scriptures bend to their own system. Had he described those persons as believers, we should have been told, that they had only a temporary faith; by which, without any reason in the world, is intended a faith that is always essentially wrong. Had he described them as loving God, the sense would have been explained away; as is done in the passage, where Christ speaks of the love of many waxing cold. Had he described them as righteous, it would have been made to signify a sort of righteousness which is in reality nothing but wickedness; for so our opponents expound the passage in Ezekiel, where the righteous man is said to turn away from his righteousness. Had they been described as escaping the corruptions which are in the world through the knowledge of Christ, and as being sanctified by the blood of the covenant, we should have been told that nothing more was intended than a false profession of religion, and when men are accustomed to such perversions of Scripture, we may expect they will call any expressions ambiguous, which do not countenance their own notions.

It would be difficult to find a passage where persons in a state of acceptance with God, are spoken of in terms more explicit and less ambiguous. The people who had fallen away, are stated to have been once enlightened. And to be enlightened denotes in Scripture language a saving change by divine grace; as where it is said, ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts. Call to remembrance the former days, in which after ye were illuminated you endured a great fight of afflictions. Here the word rendered illuminated is the same as that in the passage before us, and it will be admitted that the apostle uses it for the saving knowledge of the truth. How then can it be supposed, that when speaking to the same people in the same epistle, that he uses the word in so opposite a sense, and without giving any intimation that he deviates from its usual acceptation? When the apostle tells us they were once enlightened, and we consider the sense in which he uses the word in the same epistle, this alone is sufficient to prove that they were at

hat time in a state of salvation, and every thing added afterwards s perfectly consistent with such a state.

"It is true" says the Dr. "that Christians sustain all these characteristics, except two, viz. partaking of the Holy Ghost, and the powers of the world to come." This is a very frivolous exception, because the most highly favoured Christians, at that time, possessed these two characteristics, as well as the others. We grant that some possessed saving grace, without miraculous powers, and some might have miraculous powers, without saving grace. But the Scripture never uses the phrase, partakers of the Holy Ghost, when his miraculous powers are exclusively intended. The design of the apostle, in this place, was to shew the exceeding sinfulness of apostacy, which can only be made to appear, when men fall from a state of grace. For when they only give up their delusions or hypocritical professions, it is rather rising than falling; and for such a practice they ought to be commended, and not condemned. The higher men are advanced in privileges, the greater is their sin when they fall away. It was a greater crime for those Christians to fall away who possessed these miraculous powers, than for others; as they had stronger evidence of the truth of religion, as they were capable of doing more good while they walked as becometh the gospel, and as they were capable of doing more injury to religion after they fell away. It therefore answered the apostle's purpose to mention those gifts in connexion with saving grace, because these gifts greatly augmented the crime of apostacy. But if they had possessed gifts without grace, we cannot see how they were to be blamed for their apostacy; for, in this case, their fall was inevitable, because, if God will not give men grace, they cannot do otherwise than fall away. If the apostle, therefore, was not describing the fall of believers, his meaning is very difficult to discover, and is of no use when it comes to be discovered.

"Secondly," says the Dr., "It is not asserted by the apostle, that those, of whom he speaks, ever actually fall away. The case is stated only in the form of a supposition." To this we reply, that if given in the form of a supposition, the thing supposed must be possible to take place, or the apostle was speaking to no purpose; for neither exhortations nor admonitions could be founded upon an impossible supposition. But to assert that the case before us is only stated in the form of a supposition, is either a great mistake, or something worse. The apostle does not state it as a supposition, but as a fact which had actually taken place. Our Calvinistic translators, being more mindful to support their own opinions, than to give the sense of Scripture, have put the word *if* into the text. This word is not in the original, and the word *fall* should have been rendered in the past tense. The apostle, therefore, plainly declares that the persons spoken of had actually fallen away. We see, therefore, not only that our author has used two arguments which contradict each other, but likewise that neither of them has any foundation in truth.

14. The great Dr. Owen has bestowed much labour on this text and has strained every nerve to make it correspond with his favo:

rite and fanciful scheme of perseverance; but it was evidently too hard for him. His comment upon it is sometimes unintelligible, and contradictory, and displays a degree of disingenuousness, prejudice, and bigotry, equal at least to all his other powers. Of these failings we shall proceed to give some instances. "Some contend," he says, "that they are true believers, who are here described, and that their character is given us by sundry inseparable properties of such persons. Hence they conclude, that such believers may totally and finally fall from grace, and perish eternally. In fact, the hypothesis of the final apostacy of true believers is that by which they are influenced to suppose that such are here intended." This last assertion is manifestly false; for every man possessed of reason, if he had never heard a word on either side of the subject, would be inevitably led to conclude from this passage, that it is possible for believers to fall away; no man would think otherwise, unless his mind was previously influenced by the notion of Final Perseverance. We see therefore to what an extremity of audacity, prejudice and bigotry can carry a great mind.

He proceeds to observe of the characters described in this passage, that there "Is no express mention of any covenant grace of which they were possessed, nor of any duty of faith which they had performed." To this we reply, that covenant grace is a phrase not used in Scripture, but if it signifies the blessings of the new covenant, they are most expressly declared to have been in possession of them; for they had been enlightened, they had tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the good word of God, and were partakers of the Holy Ghost; and all these are blessings of the new covenant, and are peculiar to it, and are among the greatest it contains. With respect to no mention being made of any duty of faith they had performed; we answer, that this is the case in a thousand other passages where saints are allowed to be described. But if such duties are not expressly mentioned, they are implied according to the Dr's. own exposition. He says, they had received the spirit, "by the hearing of faith. And a participation of that spirit which was the great privilege of the gospel, was a testimony to them, that they were delivered from the bondage of the law." And he says the illumination they had received, was "attended with efficacy in the conscience, and the whole soul, producing abstinence from sin, and the performance of known duties." The known duties under the gospel are duties of faith, which, he says, they performed; and if so, it was extremely frivolous to object, that no duty of faith they performed is expressly mentioned; when, according to his own argument, such duties are evidently implied. And how could they receive the spirit by the hearing of faith, and know that by this means they were delivered from the bondage of the law, if they performed no duty of faith. And it is a very strange kind of deliverance, he makes them experience, from the bondage of the law, when at the same time, he leaves them under its curse and condemnation. He makes his non-elect partakers of five evangelical priviliges, which, to such people, can amount to no more than the privilege of being five degrees more

miserable hereafter, without having had any opportunity of escaping the damnation of hell. These, he says, they could not have been "made partakers of in their Judaism." And if they understood this, it is no wonder that many of them discovered so strong an inclination to return to their old system.

The Dr. proceeds to observe, that with respect to those in the text, the apostle does "not intimate that either the righteousness or faithfulness of God were any way engaged for their preservation, but rather the contrary." To this we reply, that it will be admitted, that the blessings they received were bestowed by the righteousness and faithfulness of God; and they must have been given, either for their preservation, or their destruction; and to make the apostle intimate, that they were given for the latter purpose, is to make him the author of blasphemy.

"To be enlightened, in this place," says the Dr., "is to be instructed in the doctrine of the gospel, so as to have a spiritual apprehension thereof. The knowledge which is received thereby, expels the darkness, ignorance, and confusion, which the mind before was filled with. A competent measure of knowledge, with respect to the fundamental principles of the gospel, is necessarily implied in the term illuminated. The illumination intended, being a gift of the Holy Ghost, differs from, and is exalted above knowledge that is purely natural. It gives the mind some satisfaction, delight, and joy, in the things known." All this is utterly unintelligible, on the supposition, that they never possessed what he calls covenant grace. And for what purpose could this knowledge be given them by the Holy Spirit, if they were, as the doctor supposes, of them whom God from eternity had rejected, and excluded from all saving mercy and grace? Why should the Holy Ghost enlighten their minds in the knowledge of that gospel in which they had no interest—no more than fallen angels? And how can the Holy Spirit be said to expel all darkness and confusion from the minds of men, and still leave them alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts? He tells us, that a competent knowledge is necessarily implied in the term illumination; but we wish to know, to what purpose it is competent. Is it competent to save them? This he will not allow. Then it can only be competent to increase their condemnation. If the Holy Spirit, by its illuminations, gave them satisfaction, delight, and joy in the gospel, it must have deceived them, by making them believe there was a possibility of being saved, when at the same time they were doomed to inevitable destruction. This is calling darkness light, and drawing error and deception from the fountain of truth. Such are the absurdities of this "system crammed commentator."

He tells us, that the persons spoken of had the Holy Ghost "in their own persons, than which there could be no greater aggravation of their apostacy." But if the Spirit never imparted unto them any saving grace, nor gave them any power to avoid falling away, their having the Spirit could not give to their apostacy any aggravation. It is no worse for a blind man to stumble by day, than to stumble by

night; because, in walking, he is no more assisted by light, than he is by darkness. And on the principle which the Dr. contends for, the Spirit of God gives no more assistance to the non-elect, in the way of salvation, than the sun affords to a blind man. And if the Spirit gives them no adequate means of preservation, it can give no aggravation to their apostacy.

Of the good word of God he observes, they are "said to taste, as before, of the heavenly gift. The apostle, as it were, studiously keeps himself to this expression, on purpose to manifest he intended not those who live on Christ, as tendered in the Gospel." To confirm the explanation he has given of the word taste, he refers to Psal. xxxiv. 8. and I Peter ii. 3; two passages which evidently contradict his comment. When David says, Taste and see that the Lord is good; he evidently means as full an enjoyment of God as could be obtained. And when St. Peter says, If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious; he does not intend to limit their experience of the divine goodness to some small degree of it; but is to be understood of a real conversion to God. So when the apostle says, the persons spoken of tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the good word of God; he means a real and full enjoyment of these blessings. As when he says, Christ tasted death, he means, that he suffered death in reality, and in the fullest sense of the word. But the Dr., in this place, is not labouring to give the sense of Scripture, but to make it the vehicle of his own Calvinistic notions; and there can be nothing more despicable in a commentator than such a practice.

He tells us, that "The Holy Ghost is present with many, as to powerful operations, with whom he is not present as to gracious inhabitations." This, he would have us to understand, was the case with the persons described in the text. Yet he has told us before, that they were made partakers of the Holy Ghost in their own persons; that his illuminations were attended with efficacy in the conscience and the whole soul; producing abstinence from sin, and the practice of known duties; that he sets up a spiritual light in their minds, respecting the Redeemer's person, offices, mediation, and work, and gives them satisfaction, delight, and joy in the things known; and he will not deny that they might have been in this gracious state for a number of years. But now we are told, that the Spirit was never present with them, with respect to his gracious inhabitation, but only with respect to his powerful operations. This is making a distinction without a difference; and if such difference existed, it cannot be proved to apply to the case before us. Such a comment cannot be suggested by the text, but by a determination to support his own opinions against both reason and Scripture.

The Dr. proceeds to observe, that the persons intended in the text "had found in themselves a convincing evidence that the kingdom of God was come to them; and they had some satisfaction in the glories of it. Such persons, as they have a work of light in their minds, may also have, according to the efficacy of their convictions, such a change in affections and conversation, as that they may be of great esteem among professors. Now it must needs be

some horrible frame of spirit, some malicious enmity against the truth and holiness of Christ and the gospel, that could turn off such persons as these from the faith, and blot out all that light and conviction of truth they had received. But the least grace is a better security for heaven than the greatest gifts and privileges whatever."

By this it appears, the Dr. would have us to believe, that people may enjoy so many precious fruits of the spirit's operations without ever receiving the least grace; but those who can believe this must be blinded by prejudice against both the light of Scripture and the dictates of reason. In Scripture all the fruits of the spirit's operations are called grace; and when men fall away they are said to fall from grace; but our author will not allow that ever they received any, and if they never received the least grace, they never received any thing which had the least tendency to prevent their falling away, and in this case, what constituted the aggravation of their apostacy? Nothing can be done acceptably in religion without the grace of God. Hence the apostle says, By the grace of God, I am what I am. I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was in me. I can do nothing of myself, but all things through Christ strengthening me. And it will be granted that the persons spoken of in the text, could no more do any thing of themselves than the apostle could, and as no grace was given them their fall was inevitable. Their want of grace sufficiently accounts for their apostacy, and the Dr. labours to no purpose when he strives to discover the cause of it in some horrible frame of mind. He says "it must needs be some horrible frame of spirit, that could turn off such persons from the faith, and blot out all that light and conviction of truth which they had received." But the question is, what was the truth which they had received and from whom, and for what purpose had they received it? By the truth, we may understand gospel doctrine, concerning God's being in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. And by the world we are told, a select few only are meant, to the exclusion of all the rest, and the persons mentioned in the text were among the number excluded before the world began from all the benefits of redemption. And in what sense therefore could they be said to receive such a truth as this? If they received it with delight and joy, as we are told they did, they must have been under a delusion, by believing there was something in the gospel that might turn out to their advantage. And does it denote some horrrible frame of mind, when men give up their delusions, and renounce a system, which can answer no other purpose to them than that of increasing their eternal misery? The Holy Ghost, it seems, revealed this truth to their minds, and at the same time concealed its meaning from them; otherwise, instead of delight and joy, it would have excited the greatest horror which ever seized the human mind; and this truth could be revealed to them with no other view, than that of filling up the measure of their calamity. Much is said about the fall of these persons, as if it had brought some great evil upon them; but what was their real condition in their best estate, when they were enlightened, when they were tasting of the heavenly

gift, partaking of the Holy Ghost, abstaining from sin, and rejoicing in the gospel? Were they not all the while under the curse of God, and the sentence of eternal perdition? On the principles contended for by our author, this must have been the case; and if so, what evil did their fall produce? If they had died in the practice of the virtues in which they had lived, and in the full enjoyment of all the gospel privileges they had ever possessed, they must still have perished for ever. Their misfortune, therefore, did not consist in falling from gospel privileges, but in having lived in the possession of them. Without these privileges, they would only have been common reprobates; but by having had them, they became the most accursed apostates. Yet, their living in these privileges was not their fault, because they were given them by the Holy Ghost. Such are the revolting absurdities advocated by this great man.

He proceeds to say, that the apostle does "not herein express his judgment, that they to whom he wrote were such as he describes, only it was necessary to give them this caution, that they might take great care not to be such." We acknowledge, that on the principle contended for, we were at at a loss to know what end the apostle had in view; we could not discover what use could be made of what he here advances; and after we are told, we are as much at a loss as ever; we cannot comprehend how it could be necessary to caution the elect against forfeiting their election, if such a thing could not possibly happen. The apostle is supposed to have known, that the elect must of necessity persevere, and the non-elect are under the inevitable necessity of falling away; and in such a case, how he could think any caution necessary, is utterly incomprehensible.

With respect to its being impossible to renew them again to repentance, the Dr. says, this is not spoken in reference to God's decrees. "For the description here is of qualifications; whereas the decrees of God respect persons primarily, and not their qualifications." That is, the decree of God, which dooms one part of mankind to eternal burnings, and the other part to eternal life, has no respect to their qualifications: when he selected some for heaven and consigned the rest to devouring fire, he had no respect either to their sin or to their holiness. This is the vilest perversion of divine truth that ever disgusted the world. It represents the Almighty, not as the Righteous Judge of all the earth, but as a whimsical tyrant, and leaves us without any motive to pursue one line of conduct in preference to another, Surely it must be some horrible frame of mind, that can induce men to form such notions of their Maker!

On that part of the passage where the apostle says, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, the Dr. maintains, that they never had repentance in reality; and that the apostle only means that they cannot be renewed again to the profession of it. But if they had been renewed before into delusion or hypocrisy, why might they not be so renewed again? Were they become too honest to make a false profession, or too wise to be deceived again by the light of the Holy Ghost? By this light they were certainly deceived, when it caused them to receive a gospel with delight and joy, which

could only end in their condemnation: but such a stratagem could not be repeated again. Such a repentance, as they are supposed to have had before, could afford them no benefit; and therefore, their being incapable of such a repentance was a circumstance they had no reason to regret; and a circumstance which could not operate as a warning to others, not even if they were in a state where warnings might be of any avail. By this we may see, how impossible it is to defend Calvinism, when all the learning and genius of Owen could not preserve him from such absurdities. We must now return to Dr. Dwight.

15. "Another passage," says this author, "pleaded for the same purpose, is the declaration of Christ, John xvii. 12. Those whom thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition." To this we answer, that we are inclined to believe, that this passage was never pleaded for the purpose here specified; but it is evident enough, that it cannot be fairly pleaded either for or against the doctrine in question. No reply to his remarks on this passage would therefore be needful; but as the gloss he puts upon it is designed to support Calvinistic Election, it requires some notice. "The meaning," he says, "of this phrase, would be completely expressed thus: Those whom thou gavest me I have kept; and none of them is lost: but the son of perdition is lost." All the liberty the Dr. takes with the text is to add a few words of his own to the end of it. But this is an unwarrantable liberty, when the sense of the text is full, proper, and distinct, without such additions; and when the additional words give the passage another meaning. If such liberty be allowed, there is no error which might not be supported by Scripture, nor any truth which might not be overturned.

As a justification of the alteration he has made, he produces the following text: Many widows were in Israel, in the days of Elias; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. On this passage our author observes, "The widow of Sarepta is here, by the very same phraseology, included among the widows of Israel; as Judas was included among those that were given to Christ." To this we reply, that the text itself informs us, that this woman was not a widow of Israel; and the drift of our Saviour's discourse requires us to understand that she was of another nation. For as a reason why he did not work miracles at Nazareth, he intimated, that they resembled their ancestors, whose sins God reproved, by sending his prophets to work miracles for heathens, rather than for them. The passage might, therefore, be rendered more plain as follows: There were many widows in Israel, in the days of Elijah, yet to none of them was Elijah sent; but *he was sent* to a widow in Sarepta. This is evidently the indisputable sense of the passage, either with or without the additional words. But as the words which are added make the sense more easily perceived, the addition of them to the text is unobjectionable. But in the passage relating to Judas, the sense is complete and distinct, without any alteration of the words; and by the addition made to it the sense is totally destroyed.

The Dr. likewise pleads the following passage: There were many lepers in Israel, in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. But this text is, if possible, further from his purpose than the other, for the sense of it may be distinctly given by a proper translation, as follows: There were likewise many lepers in Israel, in the days of Elisha the prophet; and Naaman the Syrian was cleansed, but none of those. But in the passage relating to Judas, there is no ambiguity to require any alteration whatever; and by the words added by our author, plain sense is turned into plain nonsense. Because, many sons of perdition were lost, besides Judas; and therefore, unless Judas is mentioned as an exception to Christ having kept all who were given to him, the passage is left without any rational meaning. Those persons ascribe a wonderful efficacy to our Saviour's care and diligence, who suppose that he only kept them who could not be lost; and at the same time, lost the only one among his apostles, who was ever in any danger of being lost. Such persons will never be able to prove that Judas was not given to Christ; and if they could prove this, it would not answer their purpose; for their system depends upon the meaning given to the word elect or chosen, which our Saviour applies to all his apostles, when he says, Have I not chosen you twelve? from which it follows, that Judas was one of the elect. This passage, therefore, though not directly applicable to the question before us, overthrows their notions of election, by shewing, that the word elect has not that sense in Scripture which they put upon it, and which constitutes the foundation of their whole system.

"Another passage of the same nature, says the Dr., "is that, I Tim. i. 19, Holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith, have made shipwreck. The meaning of this passage is easily learnt from a correct translation. Holding fast faith, faithfulness, or fidelity, and a good conscience; which some, that is, some teachers, having cast away, concerning the faith, have made shipwreck." To this we reply, that though the sense of the passage may be so easily learnt by a correct translation, the Dr. is not willing that we should learn it in this manuer; for the above is not a translation only, but a paraphrase. By which it appears, he would have us to understand by the word faith in the text, the doctrine of faith; but there is no reason in the world to suppose that the apostle meant the doctrine of faith, exclusive of the principle of faith. If men hold the doctrine of faith, without possessing the principle of it, it can do them no good; consequently, parting with it is no loss; and the apostle could not be so inconsistent as to compare this to a shipwreck. The solemn charge which Paul gives Timothy, founded on the example of Hymeneus and Alexander, who had fallen away, implies, that Timothy was liable to lose the pilot of a good conscience in the voyage of life, and in that case, to make shipwreck of faith. But if Timothy had a faith of which no shipwreck could be made, why did the apostle give him this solemn charge; and why did he support that charge by a reference

to an example, which, as our opponents suppose, bore no affinity to his own case. For they suppose, Hymeneus and Alexander to have had a faith which could not be kept, and Timothy to have had a faith which could not be lost; and they suppose, likewise, that the apostle, in this solemn manner, exhorted Timothy to keep a faith which he knew could not be lost; and enforced this exhortation by the example of others, who had lost a faith which could not be kept. The apostle is therefore supposed to speak contrary to all sense and reason. It is true, indeed, that on the principles our opponents contend for, an exhortation in opposition to reason is likely to prove as useful as one that is founded on the best reasons in the world. For if a certain number must of necessity stand, and a certain number must of necessity fall away; the manner in which they are exhorted can be of no importance: and if the apostle was of this opinion, he could have no inducement to speak intelligibly, or to reason conclusively.

16. The Dr. proceeds as follows. "Whatever is said concerning the apostacy of any Christian professors, is decisively explained by St. John. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us."

This passage of Scripture is brought forward by all defenders of Final Perseverance, with such an air of triumph, as if in their favour it was itself an host, invincible when attacked, and irresistible when it makes an attack. Whether it is so formidable on their side of the question as they seem to suppose, we shall have to inquire. The Dr. declares it is a decisive explanation of every thing relating to the apostacy of professing Christians. If this be a fact, we regret that it was not brought forward at an earlier stage of the debate, as it might have saved some trouble both to the writer and the reader. We likewise regret that he has given no exposition of the passage, to ascertain its signification; for it can be of no advantage to us if we cannot discover its meaning; and it is less likely to answer his own purpose, as he turns it adrift on the rough sea of disputation, without ballast, and without either rudder or compass. By this means, he sacrifices all the advantages arising from the passage, to his own private security. For he was well aware, that if he gave a meaning to the passage, which would make it favourable to his own side of the question, he could not escape detection, exposure, and chastisement. That this passage will give a decisive explanation of every thing relating to the apostacy of Christian professors, we think is very doubtful. Does it explain why so many warnings, exhortations, and threatenings, should be addressed to believers, if none of them ever did, or ever could fall away? Does it explain what constitutes the sin of apostacy, if it is only ceasing to make a false profession? Or why ceasing either to be deluded or to be hypocritical, should be made the subject of so many awful denunciations? God declares, that if professors draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in them. But how can we understand this, if he had no pleasure in them before they fell away? and surely he could have no pleasure in a false profession. Does this passage explain what constitutes

the danger of apostacy? Danger has respect both to the evil that may be suffered, and to our liability to suffer. With respect to the evil that may be suffered by apostacy, it may be observed, that if a man continue in a false profession to the end of life, his soul will be lost for ever; and it cannot be lost for a longer time by falling from such a profession. And considering how odious hypocrisy is in the sight of God, we can see no reason why a hotter place should be prepared for those who forsake their hyprocrisy, than for such as persevere in it. If God has denounced a curse against hypocrisy, and a curse against those who cease to be hypocrites, how are those opposite threatenings to be understood, or acted upon? To ascertain which of these threatenings is the most dreadful, will perhaps be more than we are able to do. But if we cannot do this, we cannot see any danger that attends apostacy, on the principle contended for, namely, that all apostates had been false professors: because, we cannot see, that such will have any more to suffer by falling away, than if they continued in such a profession to the end of life. If we speak of the danger of apostacy in reference to a liability to fall, we are as much at a loss as before. For if some must inevitably perish, and others of necessity be saved; the one class are in no danger at all, and the other in none that can be avoided; and therefore, to speak of danger to either of them, is the most useless thing in the world. Hence we see the passage in question, as well as all other passages, leaves many things unexplained, concerning the apostacy of professing Christians.

If we examine this passage, we shall find, that it affords no proof of Final Perseverance whatever. For we cannot rationally believe, that all who leave a religious community will be eternally lost, because some of them may repent and do their first works. Nor are we to suppose, that all who remain in church fellowship will be saved; for tares will grow among the wheat until the harvest. Therefore, when St. John says, that those who went out from them were not of them, he cannot be speaking of the certainty of those being lost, who went away, nor of the certainty of those being saved, who remained in their community; for neither of these things can be believed, not even by the advocates of Final Perseverance; because such as hold this doctrine believe that many backsliders are restored, and that many who remain in the Church will not be finally saved; and hence, they cannot, without manifest inconsistency, plead this passage as a proof of Final Perseverance. The argument which Calvinists draw from this passage, in favour of the doctrine in question, is inadmissible; because if it proved what they intend it to do, it would prove too much; it would prove, that all who at any time depart from a Christian community, will be eternally lost; and that all who continue members of the Church will be eternally saved; which is opposite to truth, and to the opinion of all parties on the subject. St. John does not say, that those who went out from them, never had been of them, nor that they never would be connected with them again; but only that they were not of them at the time of their departure; and that if they had been of them, that is, united

with them in sentiment and affection, they would not have left their community.

Many, in the primitive Church, embraced erroneous sentiments, such as, that except Christians were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved; and some maintained, that the gospel had freed them from all obligations to morality. These sentiments produced immoral practices, contentions, and divisions. And it became requisite for St. John to make it known, that these false teachers were not of the Apostolical Church, but were men who had separated from it, on account of a difference both in sentiment and practice. It was needful to make this known, to guard others from their pernicious errors, and to prevent the odium of their evil practices from falling on the Christian Church. This was the sole purport of St. John's declaration. He does not make the most distant allusion, either to Unconditional Election, or to Final Perseverance.

The Dr., in his concluding remarks, observes, that "Christians provoke God daily; and awaken his anger against themselves, more and more, continually. Still he preserves them from destruction. On his immutability their safety stands immoveable." It appears from the above, that Christians may continue to provoke God all their days with perfect impunity: No provocation can endanger their salvation: All the drunkenness, whoredom, murder, and blasphemy they can commit, cannot keep them out of heaven. But when it is objected, that this doctrine has an immoral tendency, our author answers, no; because, having once exercised faith, they will continue to practice an habitual obedience, to the end of life. How this agrees with Christians' provoking God daily, and awakening his anger against them more and more, continually, does not appear. But this is the way in which Calvinists defend their doctrines, by contradicting in one place, what they have maintained in another.

We are here told, the safety of saints rests on God's immutability. This preposterous argument has been answered a thousand times; yet it is still brought forward, as if it had never been refuted. He, who is every thing great, and wise, and good, cannot change for the better; and hence we not only admit, that the Almighty is unchangeable; but rejoice in the consideration, that, with him, there is no variableness, nor any shadow of turning. But from this position, we cannot infer the immutability of man; but we may rationally infer, that the Almighty will always love righteousness, and hate iniquity; consequently, if men sin wilfully, after they have received the knowledge of the truth, they cannot fail to incur the divine displeasure. God's unchangeableness is as much connected with his threatenings, as with his promises. The prophet says, O God, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and now thou comfortest me. But if repentance can make God so different to us, while he remains the same in himself; disobedience may produce an opposite effect, it may turn away his favour, and incur his hot displeasure, without any change in the divine nature.

The unchangeableness of God did not prevent the fall of man, nor the fall of angels. From his immutability, therefore, it is impossible to prove, that believers cannot fall. The Almighty brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, under a promise of entering Canaan; but their unbelief and disobedience caused him to reverse his promise, and to swear in his wrath, that they should not enter his rest; but all the while, he was the everlasting God that changes not. The fall of the Jews should operate as a warning to us; therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we escape so great salvation? Lest we should presume on being in the divine favour, we are reminded, that God spared not the angels that sinned. Behold, says the prophet, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you. By these iniquities, they had lost the favour of an unchangeable God; and those who maintain, that believers under the gospel may not do the same, are propagating strong delusions, which may cause men to believe a lie, and may end in their destruction.

The Dr. observes, that the Almighty hath said, I am Jehovah; I change not. "This attribute" he says, "is the seal, the certainty, of every promise; and sooner shall heaven and earth pass away, than one jot or one tittle of that which is promised, shall fail." To this we reply, that the unchangeableness of God, is as much the seal and certainty of the threatenings, as it is of the promises; but if no sin can endanger the salvation of the elect, the threatenings to them are rendered null and void. Christians, he says, provoke God daily, and awaken his anger against themselves more and more continually, but yet they are perfectly secure, because heaven and earth will sooner pass away, than that which is promised should fail. Here he borrows expressions from the sermon on the mount, but perverts the sense of them; for our Saviour is there speaking of the stability of the divine law, not of the promises only; the law includes precepts and threatenings, as well as promises; and if either the precepts or the threatenings be set aside, the law is destroyed. All the threatenings are set aside, if those who are provoking God to anger daily are perfectly secure, all the threatenings might as well be blotted out of the Bible, as far as such persons are concerned, if they cannot fall away, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit. As the immutability of God relates as much to one part of his word as another, it can never prove the doctrine of Final Perseverance.

The Dr., in conlusion, tells us, that the promises yield consolation. This, in one sense, is certainly true, but if it be meant, that the promises afford consolation, only as they are connected with Final Perseverance, we know it to be false. The advocates of this doctrine

strongly insist on the comfort arising from it, as if Christian consolation abounded here, and could be found no where else. This notion we have refuted on a former occasion, and on this account, shall make but a short reply to it here. In the first place, we may observe, that the comfort arising from a doctrine is no proof of its truth. The opinion, that all men will be saved, is a comfortable doctrine to such as can believe it; but yet it cannot be true; because it contradicts the word of God. The comfort, therefore, arising from the doctrine of Final Perseverance, is no proof that it is true. But this doctrine cannot be productive of spiritual consolation; for those Christians, who do not believe this doctrine, have as much or more comfort than those who do believe it, and can give a better reason for it. If we believe in Final Perseverance, we must believe, that all who finally fall away were never possessed of true religion; and if so, we can have no decisive evidence of our own acceptance with God. And what comfort can it yield to know that the elect will certainly persevere, if we do not know that we are elected? But those who believe, that some may have fallen away from the possession of true religion, may have a satisfactory evidence of possessing true religion themselves; and those who have the evidence of being in the way to heaven for the present, must have more consolation than others who are destitute of that evidence.

17. We have now come to the end of the Dr.'s arguments for Perseverance, and have seen their weakness and futility; and when so great a philosopher and divine fails so completely at every point, he must have been engaged in a bad cause. It is a happy thing for the world, that such great divines can do so much for the truth, and so little when they set themselves against it. When men of the greatest talents undertake to defend Calvinism, we see the wisdom of Ahithophel turned into foolishness.

Dwight defends Final Perseverance with as much zeal and pertinacity. as if he had been a thorough paced Calvinist; yet there are some parts of that system, which he would have been very glad to renounce. He labours to refute reprobation, and proves the universality of the atonement, with great clearness and strength of argument. And with great force and propriety, he refutes and exposes the infamous doctrine of Antinomianism. But it is surprising that he he did not perceive, that he was building the whole Babel up again in the present discourse. His notion of Final Perseverance cannot be defended without unconditional election to eternal life; and such an election is inseparably connected with reprobation. The word reprobate may be left out, but the thing intended by it must of necessity remain in every modification of Calvinism. If none go to heaven but such as are unconditionally elected before they were born, as the defenders of that doctrine maintain, then all who are not so elected must perish unavoidably and eternally. And to plead, that they were not appointed to this dreadful fate before the fall of Adam, but only left in it afterwards, is a thing of no importance whatever; because, it neither lessens the horrors of their situation, nor affords them any means of avoiding it. And on this principle,

to plead that Christ died for all, is vanity and vexation of spirit. For if none can be saved but the elect, the death of Christ can have no other effect on the rest, than that of increasing their condemnation. When men hold unconditional election to heaven, and at the same time plead that Christ died for all, they increase the horrors of Calvin's horrible decree. Those who defend Final Perseverance, must maintain, that no sin can endanger the salvation of the elect; and this will completely establish Antinomianism. Final Perseverance cannot therefore be otherwise defended, than by establishing all the objectionable parts of Calvin's system. This system is so consistent with itself, as to be one and indivisible; though it is inconsistent with every thing else. Compare it with the dictates of reason, with the universal experience of mankind, with the word of God, or even with the general strain of what is called Calvinistic preaching, and it will be found the most inconsistent thing in the world. It has the likeness of nothing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath. The heathen doctrine of fate, and the Mahometan doctrine of predestination, form no exception to what is here asserted; because they are for substance the same thing. At the same time, the Calvinistic system is so far consistent with itself, that all its parts must stand or fall together, But some of its modern advocates spare no pains to prove the reverse of this; they exert all their ingenuity to retain those parts which are most plausible, and reject those which are most objectionable; but by a slight inspection of their writings, it will be seen, that they labour in vain, and spend their strength for nought.

18. As an illustration of the preceding remark, we refer to a discourse on Election and Final Perseverance, by Thomas Scott, the celebrated commentator. This author maintained the universality of the atonement, for which he thought proper to make the following apology. "The reader," he says, "will perceive, that the principal difference betwixt the statement there given of the doctrine in question, and that of many modern Calvinists, relates to redemption by the death of Christ, as being of infinite sufficiency, and therefore in some respects the common benefit of mankind. This view of the subject makes not the least difference, in respect of the entire freeness of salvation by the sovereign purpose and grace of God, made known in the effectual calling of his chosen remnant; whilst it gives the preacher an immense advantage in fulfilling the ministry of reconciliation, and yields the awakened sinner the greatest encouragement in applying to Christ for salvation. On this ground, we may say to any human being, believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. But, on the other plan, no sinner can know, previously to conversion, whether he has any more right to rely on the merits of Christ, than fallen angels have."

It appears by the above, that the author has adopted such an improved scheme of Calvinism, as gives more liberty to a preacher, and more encouragement to an awakened sinner. Of this scheme, it is needful to hear his own statement, After quoting such texts as, God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, who is

the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. He tell us, that he "dare not use arts of criticism, to narrow the obvious sense of these and similar texts." But if it be inquired, whether Christ died to procure the salvation of any but the elect, our Commentator will reply, "that none but the elect can eventually be benefited by the death of Christ." And respecting the cause why they cannot be benefited by the death of Christ, he is equally explicit; it is because God will not give them his grace. Among those, he observes, to whom Christ is offered, one receives him, and another does not; the reason of which he accounts for by saying, "Distinguishing grace is communicated to one and not to the other by a sovereign God. He, and he alone, hath made one man to differ from another. Now, was this distinction intentionally made by the sovereign disposer of all things, or was it not? If intentionally, was that intention first conceived at the moment of execution, or previously? If previously, why not from eternity?" To throw as much light on the subject as possible, he says, "The sun is created, and placed in the open firmament, for the common benefit of mankind; there is in that luminary no defect of light, nor would there be any, were innumerable additional millions to share the benefit. Yet some men do not see; not from any defect in the sun, but from one in themselves. God, who is no debtor to his creatures, gives the blessing of sight to whom he will: but if he withhold or withdraw it, man is benighted at noon-day."

By this development of his improved scheme of preaching the gospel, we are taught that Christ is of no more benefit to the non-elect, than the sun is to a blind man. And this is what gives a preacher an immense advantage in fulfilling the ministry of reconciliation; and yields the awakened sinner the greatest encouragement. Sinners may be told for their encouragement, that nothing hinders them from seeing the light, but only their blindness; a blindness which God from eternity has purposed never to remove, and which no other person can remove. Their encouragement is, that there is sufficient light in the firmament; only, their Creator has determined that they shall never have a sight of it. Upon the old plan of Calvinistic preaching, this author tells us, "no sinner can know, previously to conversion, whether he has any more right to rely on the merits of Christ, than fallen angels have." This we admit as an indisputable fact; but is it not exactly the same upon the plan laid down by himself? For no man can be benefited by the death of Christ, without that special grace, which God from eternity has determined never to grant to any but the elect. On this principle, therefore, as well as on the other, no sinner can know before his conversion, whether he has any more right to rely on the merits of Christ, than fallen angels have. When he speaks of this plan giving so much liberty to preachers and encouragement to sinners, if not accustomed to Calvinistic logic, we should wonder that any man out of St. Luke's Hospital, could use such arguments.

He supposes, that a preacher will be much shackled if he confines the death of Christ to the elect; but he will be at full liberty, if he confines special grace to them, which alone can make the Saviour's

death of any avail. But if a minister feel reluctant to make an offer of Christ to all, from the consideration that he died for the elect only, he must feel the same reluctance, from the consideration, that none but the elect can be benefited by his death. A person of humanity and compassion, would feel reluctant to invite the hungry to eat, if he had no bread to set before them; but he would not feel less reluctance on account of having bread to set before them, if an iron grate was so placed, as to render it impossible for them to partake of it. Of the two, the latter is the most distressing case. Christ is the bread which came down from heaven; he gave his flesh for the life of the world; but however sufficient this may be for the purpose, since God has determined to give his grace to none but the elect, all the rest are as effectually prevented from partaking of this heavenly bread, as if it had never come into the world. Yet this is the plan which is supposed to give so much encouragement to sinners, and liberty to preachers. "On this ground," observes our author, "we may say to any human being, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." But if they cannot believe without that grace which is never to be given them, we might as well say, Make yourselves wings, and fly away as an eagle towards heaven; and you will be received into the realms of bliss. For if we are to offer salvation on impossible terms, we might as well propose one impossibility as another: the latter proposal would not be a greater mockery of human indigence than the other. And can we suppose that the divine being will treat mankind in this manner?

"It is very hard indeed," says Dr. Watts, "to vindicate the sincerity of the blessed God or his Son, in their universal offers of grace and salvation to men; and their sending ministers with such messages and invitations to accept of mercy, if there be not at least a conditional pardon and salvation provided for them. His ministers indeed, as they know not the event of things, may be sincere in offering salvation to all persons, according to their general commission, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. But how can God or Christ be sincere in sending them with this commission, to offer his grace to all men, if God has not provided such grace for all men? It is hard to suppose, that the great God, who is truth itself, and faithful in all his dealings, should call upon dying men, to trust in a Saviour for eternal life, when this Saviour has not eternal life entrusted with him, to give them, if they do as he requires. 'Tis hard to conceive how the great Governor of the world can be sincere in inviting sinners, who are on the brink of hell, to cast themselves upon an empty word of invitation, and mere shadow and appearance of support, if there be nothing real to bear them up from these depths of destruction; nothing but mere words, and empty invitations! Can we think, that the righteous and holy God would encourage his ministers to call them to rest the weight of their immortal concerns upon a gospel, a covenant of grace, a Mediator, and his merit and righteousness! all which are a mere nothing with regard to them; a heap of empty names, an unsupporting void, which cannot uphold them?"

In what is here stated, Dr. Watts has no doubt in view, that scheme which limits the atonement to a select few. But his arguments are equally applicable to the other scheme, which limits the gift of grace to the same persons; for there can be no more sincerity in inviting blind men to enjoy the light of the sun, than there would have been in such an invitation, if no light had been created.

"None," says our commentator, "but the elect can eventually be benefited by the death of Christ; *yet there is a sense of vast importance, in which it may be properly said, that his blood is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.*" If we could discover what this sense of vast importance is, we might see how far the scheme which he advocates is preferable to the other. To maintain that Christ died for all, can be of no more importance to the elect than the other scheme: and of what importance can it be to the non-elect, if they are never to be benefited by the death of Christ? All the importance it can be of to them, is by making them more miserable in the world to come. Such is the vast importance of this improved scheme of Calvinism, which is to free preachers from their trammels, and sinners from their discouragements.

But this is not the only advantage which he expects to result from maintaining that Christ died for such as are from eternity excluded from all mercy and grace, for by this plan he thinks the Scriptures will be more easily reconciled. He "earnestly desires all who dare to think for themselves, to consider what immense pains and ingenuity it requires, to explain a variety of texts in consistency with the other scheme; with what confidence and plausibility opponents urge them against our doctrines; and yet how naturally they coincide with the view here given." Here he seems to have proper views of the difficulty of reconciling Scripture with the notion, that Christ died for the elect only; but it is surprising that a man could imagine, for a moment, that there is less difficulty in reconciling the Scripture to the opinion, that God will give his grace only to the elect. We readily admit, that the former scheme requires immense labour and ingenuity; and all the pains and ingenuity in the world will prove inadequate to the task. And it must be the same with the latter scheme; because the promises and declarations of Scripture, relating to the Spirit and grace of God, are as universal as those which relate to the death of Christ; therefore, besides all the difficulties of the former scheme, the latter has this additional one, it requires it to be accounted for, how God could give his Son to die for those to whom he will not give his grace. The apostle says, He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? If there be any strength in the apostle's argument, it proves, that Christ is the greatest of gifts, and he that has given the greater will give the less. It proves, that sufficient grace will be given to all for whom Christ died; and that God has given us the greatest assurance of this by the gift of his Son. But in opposition to this, our commentator would have us to believe, that God has given his Son to die for multitudes, to whom he will never give his grace; and he wishes this to be believed,

without producing a single passage where any such thing is either expressed or implied, and in direct opposition to all the promises of grace and mercy which God has ever made to mankind. This is a scheme which human ingenuity can never reconcile with the word of God.

19. In our author's opinion, some Calvinists are not always natural and obvious in their interpretations; and he proposes his scheme as a remedy for this defect. And when it is objected, that it does not consist with the justice of God, that any should perish for whom Christ died, he replies, "It is allowed, that Christ in dying for sinners intended to save none but those who eventually shall be saved. In respect of this intention, he says, his blood was shed for many for the remission of sins; and he gave his life a ransom for many. Yet, in paying this ransom, there was not barely a sufficient atonement made for them, but as it were, a redundancy of merit, sufficient even for the sins of all men; and in respect of this sufficiency, he is said to give himself a ransom for all; and to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Peter, therefore, scruples not to speak of those who deny the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction; and Paul, of destroying those for whom Christ died. It might be expected, that systematical expositors would find out other interpretations of all these testimonies; but the question is, whether their interpretations are natural and obvious, and such as they would deem admissible in different circumstances." How far this is a specimen of natural and obvious interpretation, is of no importance for us to decide; but certainly it is no answer to the objection. If Christ died to procure salvation unconditionally, the objection is unanswerable; but if he died to procure salvation conditionally, and the condition is not fulfilled, the objection falls to the ground. For if men reject such a precious remedy, the justice of God will be more conspicuously, displayed in their destruction, than if no remedy had been provided. But as our author supports the notion of unconditional election, he was not able to give any rational reply to the objection.

In the course of his natural and obvious interpretations, he tells us, that as the merit of Christ is sufficient for all, the Scripture declares, he gave himself a ransom for all. Thus the Scripture is made to speak such nonsense as would not be tolerated in any other book. There may be money enough in the Bank of England, to ransom all the slaves in the West Indies; but is it therefore for them? Christ will say to them on the left hand, I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; naked and ye clothed me not: as ye did it not to my brethren, ye did it not unto me. To this they might reply, that they had provided a sufficiency of food and apparel, though they never intended it to be of any use to the hungry or the naked; and if the Scripture teaches them to reason and speak in this manner, on what ground could such a plea be rejected?

Our author tells us, that there is "an immeasurable fulness of mercy and grace treasured up in Christ to be communicated according to the eternal purpose and council of God." And as we are informed, the purpose of God is to communicate it to the elect only;

and if God has determined never to give it to the non-elect, in what sense can it be said to be for them, or what encouragement can this fulness give them who are never to partake of it? But the reason, he says, why others do not partake of it, is on account of their "impenitency and unbelief." But we ask, Had not the elect as much impenitency and unbelief, previous to the communication of divine grace? and would not the same grace as effectually remove the impenitency and unbelief of the non-elect, if it should be given to them? if so, it is not their impenitency and unbelief which prevent their salvation, but that decree, which excluded them before they were born from all the benefits of redemption.

To shew what encouragement his scheme gives to sinners, he says, "Imagine the basest character, which ever disgraced humanity, and scourged the world; one grown hoary in multiplied robberies, murders, adulteries, rapes, and unnatural lusts; and breathing out perjuries and blasphemies, as if ambitious of pre-eminence in profaneness; if even this man truly come to Christ, he will in no wise cast him out." We are to understand by this that such a person will not be cast out, if he be one of the elect. By what he here states, in connection with the principle he is contending for, it is supposed, that one of the elect may pursue such a course of wickedness, and all the while his salvation is as secure, as if he had been adorning the doctrine of God, his Saviour, by a holy life and conversation. What inducement, then, have men to leave their iniquities? Abstaining from sin will not make any man one of God's elect; nor can the vilest course of wickedness cause one of the elect to forfeit his privilege. We may imagine one of the non-elect an exemplary character, an ornament to society, and a blessing to the world; eminent for truth, honesty, temperance, chastity, patience, and benevolence; one that goes about doing good, and lives in the exercise of prayer and praise; yet, because he is not elected, he cannot escape the damnation of hell. His Maker never gives him any thing but common grace, which cannot fail to increase his condemnation. Such is the only encouragement which any scheme of Calvinism can ever give to mankind. All it can for substance say, to either the pious or profane, is, that if they are elected, they will be saved, and if not elected, they will be damned. Neither their moral nor immoral conduct can make any change in their eternal destiny.

But our author is of opinion, that a great deal depends upon the manner in which sinners are addressed. In them who are saved, he says, "grace proves victorious; and, though resisted, by invincible efficacy, it gains the ascendancy. When all are invited, none will come but they who are willing; none are willing, but such as are made willing by God; he makes none willing but the elect: he would have all encouraged who are willing: he will have all sinners left without excuse: and there is no way to answer these ends, but by free and urgent invitations, connected with warnings, instructions, exhortations, and expostulations. If this stile of address be not adopted, you quench the smoking flax." Here we are told, that God would have all encouraged who are willing; but none are

willing, except such as he makes willing; and he will make none willing but the elect. It follows, therefore, that he would have none else encouraged. And how does this make sinners inexcusable? If God will not give them his grace, is it not a sufficient excuse for their remaining graceless? Is not every man excusable for not performing an impossibility? However often they are told, that there is sufficient merit in Christ to save them, it does not make them less excusable, if that merit is not intended for them, and must never be given to them. Our author maintains, that if a style of free and urgent invitations be not adopted, you quench the smoking flax. But surely he cannot mean, that this can be done in the elect, in whom an invincible efficacy of grace always gains the ascendancy; and it is of no moment, what may be quenched in the non-elect, because nothing can quench those eternal flames, prepared for them before the world began.

"Probably," he says, "few perish where the word of God is fully preached, without many awakenings, fears, desires, and endeavours." But we ask, What better are they for all these awakenings, desires, and endeavours, if they are from eternity excluded from all saving grace? In whatever manner the word of God may be preached, the elect will be saved, and the non-elect must be damned; for in all Calvinistic schemes, this is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. Thus, whoever is the defender of Calvinism, the defence is inevitably unscriptural, irrational, and absurd.

20. We have seen, that the most plausible scheme of Calvinism ever adopted includes the eternal and unconditional election of some to eternal life, and the utter exclusion of all others from the mercy and grace of God: every modification, therefore, of this system is, for substance, the same thing. It equally establishes reprobation and Antinomianism. In such company, Final Perseverance must be received, if received at all; and whatever refutes either of these detestable opinions, refutes the notion of Final Perseverance. From this it appears, that the two last sections have not been a digression from the subject in hand. We must now proceed to notice some other passages of Scripture, which are pleaded in favour of the doctrine in question, but which are omitted by Dwight; and shall select such as are thought to be of the most vital importance to that doctrine, and are most frequently pleaded in its defence.

Of this description is the following passage: For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders: insomuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Matt. xxiv. 24. Those who produce this passage as a proof of Final Perseverance, understand the word elect to signify an unconditional appointment to eternal life, a sense which it never has in the word of God. When this passage, therefore, is brought forward in this cause, the principal point is assumed, which requires to be proved. It may likewise be observed, that the word in Scripture rendered impossible, does not always denote what cannot be done by any means, but what cannot be done without great difficulty. As Dr. Owen remarks on Heb. vi. 4., and which applies to the words here

rendered, If it were possible; which signify, that these false prophets would deceive, if they were able, the very elect; that is, they would do what they could to deceive them; and therefore, our Saviour warned them to be on their guard, lest they should be deceived.

Those who pretended to be the Messiah, performed signs and wonders, and drew after them many Jews, Samaritans, and Heathens; but it was a more difficult thing for them to seduce Christians, because Christians, who were now the very elect, as the Jews had formerly been, could perform greater signs and wonders in proof that their Lord and Master was the only true Messiah. Besides, our Saviour's warnings might have the desired effect, in preventing his followers from being deceived by these false Christs and false prophets. But it was not absolutely impossible that they might have been deceived by these false teachers, for our Saviour says, in the preceding part of the same chapter, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And it would be an impeachment of our Saviour's wisdom, to make him say, Take heed lest these men deceive you, for it is absolutely impossible that they should deceive you. But they make our Saviour speak in this manner, who plead this passage as a proof of Final Perseverance. If it had been absolutely impossible for these false prophets to deceive Christians, it would not follow, that they could not be deceived by any other means, or fall away by any other seducements. Our Saviour exhorted them to watch and pray, lest their hearts should be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and that day should come upon them at unawares; which shews, that if they had been secure from false prophets, it was possible for them to fall away by the lusts of the flesh. This passage, therefore, is no proof of Final Perseverance.

Another passage, brought forward for the same purpose, is 1 John iii. 9. He that is born of God cannot sin. And we acknowledge, that if it can be proved, that a believer cannot sin, it will follow of course, that he cannot fall away; for a man can no otherwise fall from grace, than as he falls into sin. But our opponents maintain, that a believer cannot live without committing sin; and in whatever way the apostle's declaration is reconciled with the possibility of sinning; in the same manner it will be reconciled with the possibility of falling away. The Christian Fathers expounded this passage as follows: He that is born of God sinneth not, whilst he is born of God; because he ceaseth to be a child of God when he sins. This must have been the meaning of St. John. It corresponds with St. Paul's declaration, They that are in the flesh cannot please God. At the same time he is endeavouring to persuade them to please God. He could, therefore, only mean, that they could not do this without a change of heart, without ceasing to be carnally minded which is death, to be spiritually minded which is life and peace. So St. John is endeavouring to persuade believers to flee from sin; and it would have been the extremity of folly to tell them at the same time, that they could not commit sin. But to maintain, that they could not sin, without losing the spirit, and forfeiting the privilege

of adoption, answered his purpose; because he was refuting the Antinomian delusions of such as declared, that sin did not endanger the salvation of Christians. This passage, therefore, is so far from proving Final Perseverance, that it proves the very reverse; as those other passages do, where St. John exhorts believers to abide in Christ, that they may not be ashamed at his coming; and to look to themselves, that they may not lose what has been wrought.

Another text, pleaded in the same cause, is 1 Pet. i. 5 Who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. On this passage it is to be observed, that it is through faith that God will keep us in the way of salvation; but without faith, it is impossible to please him. So long, therefore, as we live in the exercise of a living faith, we shall be divinely supported, and infallibly preserved; we shall be kept in the way, and rewarded in the end. Hence that promise, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. But neither these passages, nor any others, prove that we cannot depart from the faith; not that faith will be the instrument of our preservation, unless it is a faith that produces obedience; for faith without works is dead, and can no more profit us, than it can profit fallen angels. The faith by which we are saved, is a faith that works by love, and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. When believers fall into sin, they fall from this faith, and exclude themselves from the promise of being kept by divine power. So long as a divine power keeps us from sin, it keeps us in perfect safety; but no longer. A divine power is afforded to believers, no further than is consistent with a state of probation, with their free-agency, and their accountability to God. But believers could not be in a state of probation, if they were irresistibly preserved. And a perseverance effected by an irresistible power on the part of God, could not be rewarded. Happiness might be the result; but that happiness could not be a reward. Those who are kept through the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, are exhorted to hold fast the beginning of their confidence, stedfast unto the end; to take heed lest there be in them an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; to beware, lest being led away by the error of the wicked, they fall from their stedfastness; to give all diligence, that they may never fall. No one gave such exhortations more earnestly than St. Peter; and he could not be so inconsistent as to declare at the same time, that a divine power rendered the fall of believers impossible. If he could have been so inconsistent, his declarations would have furnished no ground for our dependance.

Another passage, pleaded for the same purpose, is Job xvii. 9. The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. This, it is said, must be a proof of perseverance; otherwise no more would be affirmed, than, that a man will be righteous while he is righteous. But we may perhaps discover a more rational meaning in the passage than this. Job had been speaking of his afflictive dispensation, and he now declares the good effect it will produce upon others. Some might be ready to suppose, that the great afflictions which so pious a man had met

with, would deter others from walking in the paths of religion, by leading them to conclude, that there was no profit in serving God. But Job declares that a contrary effect will be produced; that the righteous will be furnished with an inducement to hold on his way. The case of Job would shew that afflictions are no marks of God's displeasure; that his grace is always sufficient; that religion is a most valuable possession in the day of adversity; and that there must be a future reward for the righteous: and from these considerations, the righteous are encouraged to hold on their way. The apostle says, Many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. And Job anticipates the same advantages from his afflictions, and therefore declares, that the righteous shall hold on his way.

But the sense of the passage is destroyed by those who produce it as a proof of the absolute certainty of perseverance. For on this principle, it might have been replied to Job, You need not speak of your afflictions furnishing any inducement to the righteous to hold on his way, because the righteous must of necessity hold on his way; and therefore you are attributing an advantage to your case, which cannot arise from it. But when we admit the possibility of the righteous not holding on his way, then we see the propriety of Job's assertion, and feel the force of his argument.

It is usual with defenders of Final Perseverance, to quote passages in proof of their opinions, which evidently and conspicuously prove the very reverse. Caryl, for instance, on the passage under consideration, to prove that the righteous must of necessity hold on his way, quotes Rev. xxii. 11, he that is righteous, let him be righteous still. There was no man in his day better able to give the sense of Scripture, than this judicious and indefatigable commentator, when his judgment was not warped by Calvinian prejudice; but he discovers such prejudice, when he quotes and explains this passage as a proof of Final Perseverance. The time predicted by the angel, when the righteous shall be righteous still, is the time when the unholy must be unholy still; which is not the case under the gospel dispensation, but what will take place at the final judgment, when Christ will come to give to every man as his work shall be. And when in reference to that period, it is affirmed, that the righteous will then be righteous still, it most evidently implies, that this was not necessarily the case before; for it would be strange indeed, if an angel from heaven should be sent to predict the arrival of a period, when the righteous should be righteous still, if this had invariably been the case in all former ages.

Another passage, pleaded as a proof of perseverance, is Mat. xvi. 18, Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. It is argued from this promise, that the security of the whole must extend to every individual; because the whole Church is made up of individual members; and therefore, if every individual is not safe, the whole is not secure. If any individual man may fall, the whole may fall. To this we reply, that this plausible sophistry may be easily exploded. The Almighty frequently promised safety and victory to the army of

Israel; but this did not secure individual safety and victory; for many individuals were slain, when the whole proved victorious; and therefore, such promises did not render any individual infallibly secure. The Almighty promised to bring the Jewish nation into the land of Canaan; and that nation was as much composed of individuals, as the Christian Church; but the promise of the inheritance to the whole did not secure it to every individual; for many of them fell in the wilderness. Among those who came up out of Egypt, and who had arrived at years of maturity, none reached Canaan, except Caleb and Joshua; and if these likewise had died on the other side of Jordan, still the promise would have been finally accomplished. The Almighty promised to bring the Jews out of Babylon, and to give them rest in their own land. Yet no individual knew whether he would live to see the promise accomplished; or if he lived to the time, he did not know whether he would be among the number of those who returned to Jerusalem, or among such as remained in Babylon; for there were a great many of the latter description, who preferred the property they had acquired in captivity, to the spiritual privileges of Zion. If he should be among the number that returned to Judea, he did not know whether he might not be slain by the Samaritans, as many of them were, before a peaceable settlement was obtained. Yet the promise of deliverance, and of a settlement in their own land, was as much made to every individual, as the promise is, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. This latter promise, therefore, does not prove that any individual is certain to persevere.

Another portion of Scripture, which has been brought forward in support of perseverance, is Jer. xxxi. 39 & 40, And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. In reply, it may be observed, that the Almighty is not here intending to contradict himself; and therefore, this passage does not obliterate all the conditions which are so numerously dispersed through the Bible; and if not, the conditions elsewhere expressed, are here implied. "The certainty of the continuance of the civil prosperity of the Jewish nation, might with much greater propriety be drawn from the passages aforementioned, than their perseverance in grace. For God promises that he will do thus and thus by them, for the good of them, and of their children after them. Ver. 19. And again, that he will make an everlasting covenant with them, that he will not turn away from them to do them good; that he will plant them in their own land assuredly, with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. Ver. 40 & 41. And yet we know, that notwithstanding all these promises on God's part, he hath turned away from them in great displeasure; yea, St. Paul tells us, that his wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. 1 Thess. ii. 16. And they are accordingly, at this day, the most contemptible and miserable nation under heaven. This plainly shews, that all these pro-

nises were conditional, although none be expressed; and the performance of them suspended on their obedience. If, then, the temporal promises, connected with the spiritual, in the same discourse, and much more fully expressed than these, be conditional; why may we not suppose the spiritual promises also to be subject to the same law? Nay, certainly, had the promises of grace been unconditional, the promises respecting temporal things would have been so likewise. For had God absolutely given them one heart and one way, so that they had absolutely feared him for ever, or put his fear into their hearts, upon any such terms, that they had not departed from him, without all doubt, the temporal promises had been performed; God would not have turned away from them to do them good, and their children after them; but would have rejoiced over them to do them good, and would have planted them in their own land."

21. Some plead, that as believers are members of Christ, they cannot fall away; because it would be inconsistent to suppose, that the members could be in hell, while the head was in heaven. In this manner they defend an imaginary and improbable opinion, by straining metaphors beyond the limits of their natural and obvious signification. Those who are now members of Christ, did not stand in that relationship, till they were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God; and if they depart from the faith, they will cease to be members of Christ. The apostle supposes that the members of Christ may be given to an harlot. I Cor. vi. 15, 16. And if they be given to an harlot, they will be given to Satan; for he that committeth sin is of the devil. To suppose that the members of Christ do not forfeit their privilege, when they live in wilful transgression, is to establish a communion between light and darkness—between Christ and Belial.

Some plead, that as the principle of holiness in believers is the work of God, it is of an imperishable nature, and consequently can never be lost. But in reply to this, we ask, Was not the principle of holiness in our first parents, and in angels, the work of God? And if that principle failed in them, notwithstanding its being the work of God, this argument, of course, falls to the ground, as many mightier have done before.

If the arguments and passages, already noticed, do not prove Final Perseverance, it will be admitted, that it must for ever remain unproved. For if the strongest arguments and the most appropriate passages cannot establish this doctrine, all others must fail, of course. And all the arguments noticed have been shewn to be inconclusive and fallacious; and all the passages of Scripture brought forward have been shewn to have no such signification as is required for the proof of that doctrine: and by this refutation of error, the opposite truth is confirmed.

22. Our limits imperiously demand the suppression of a considerable part of what we had further to advance, and leave room only for a few additional remarks.

In the first place, we observe, that the possibility of believers falling away, is the evident and uniform doctrine of Scripture; of

which the following may be taken as a specimen. The covenant which God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as with their posterity, was conditional. Levit. xxvi. 3, &c. One who is righteous in the judgment of God himself, may finally fall from grace. Ezek. xviii. 24. A faith which produces a good conscience may be lost, 1 Tim. i. 18, 19. Those who are grafted into the spiritual Church may finally fall. Rom. xi. 17, &c. Those who are grafted into Christ, the true vine, may finally fall from grace. John xv. 1, &c. Those who so effectually knew Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world, may fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21. Such as have been savingly enlightened, and have enjoyed the witness and fruits of the spirit, may so fall away, that they cannot be renewed again to repentance. Heb. vi. 4—8. Those who have lived by faith, may draw back, and perish everlastingly. Heb. x. 38. Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may sin wilfully, and perish in their iniquity. Heb. x. 26, 28.

See likewise the following passages. Matt. v. 13. xii. 45. xxiv. 10, &c. Luke xxi. 16. John v. 16. viii. 31, 32. 1 Cor. ix. 27. x. 3, &c. 2 Cor. vi. 1. Gal. v. 4. vi. 9. Heb. iii. 4. 2 Peter iii. 17. 2 John v. 8. Rev. iii. 11. For an illustration of these passages, and a confirmation of the doctrine they contain, and a refutation of Calvinistic perversions of them, see Wesley's Predestination calmly considered. A long train of arguments, drawn from Scripture, which demonstratively prove, that believers may fall away, may be seen in Whitby on the Five Points. The whole body of primitive Christians believed it possible for believers to fall away. For a confirmation of this, see Goodwin's Redemption Redeemed, chap. 15th.

The Scripture declares, that neither fornicators, nor idolaters, shall inherit the kingdom of God. But the doctrine of Final Perseverance exempts all, who have at any time been true believers, from the penalty of this law; for it teaches them, that they may turn fornicators and idolaters, and still retain their title to heaven. If, after the commission of such crimes, they should live and die without repentance, it has been discovered by the notable Elisha Coles, that even in this case, their salvation would be secure. "*But suppose a believer*," he says, "*be taken away in his sin, (as perhaps Josiah was,) and hath not time to repent of it. There was that in him that would have repented: and God reckons of a man according to what he would do. It being in David's heart to build him an house, it was accepted as if he had done it. The root of the matter is in every regenerate person, which, if he had time, would put forth itself into fruits: and therefore they shall not be dealt with as barren trees, which have not that substance in them.*" Such a doctrine gives the greatest encouragement to sin, and renders all the cautions, warnings, admonitions, and threatenings of Scripture, null and void. Either this doctrine must be renounced, or we must give up the Bible.

"That doctrine, which makes void or foolish all the gracious counsels of the Holy Ghost, which consist, partly, in the diligent information which he gives to the saints, concerning the malicious designs of Satan; partly, in detecting his subtil stratagems; partly, in furnishing them with spiritual weapons, whereby they may withstand and overcome him; partly, in those frequent exhortations and encouragements to resist him, which are to be found in the Scriptures; that doctrine, I say, which reflects the least disparagement on these most serious and gracious applications of the Holy Ghost to the saints, must needs be a vain and erroneous doctrine; but such is the doctrine of absolute perseverance." "Is it not the part of a very weak and simple person, to admonish another in the most serious manner of some danger threatening him, and also to give him a variety of rules and cautions how to escape this danger, when both he and the person admonished know that it is a thing altogether impossible, that ever the danger should befal him?"

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Page 38, line 6, for *un*conditionally, read, conditionally.

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THE

INTERCESSION OF CHRIST,

AND THE

BENEFITS RESULTING FROM IT:

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE CONFERENCE, AT HALIFAX,

IN THE YEAR 1829,

AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST.

By ABRAHAM SCOTT.

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1830.

A SERMON, &c.

" *Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*—HEB. vii. 25.

IN every period of life we ought to remember, that it is appointed for all men once to die, and after death the judgment. The judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened: and every individual of the human race, must either be adjudged to eternal life, or doomed to everlasting misery. And since man is placed in this awful state of responsibility, the most interesting and important inquiry he can make is that of the gaoler at Philippi, when he came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, " Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And it is the leading design of the Gospel to answer this momentous question. It reveals Christ as the Saviour of men; and declares there is no name given under heaven by which we can be saved, but the name of Christ: neither is there salvation in any other. And when our expectations are cut off, from every other resource, it is reasonable to inquire, on what ground we may hope to be saved through our Lord Jesus Christ? And the Gospel makes it appear, that one ground of our confidence in Christ, is the great love wherewith He has loved us. He has so loved us as to lay down his life for us. Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend; but when we were enemies to God, Christ died for us. But however extensive his benevolence might be, we could not trust in Him and not be afraid, unless He possessed equal ability. Hence the apostle in the commencement of this epistle, not only sets forth the riches of his grace, but likewise the abundance of his power. He describes Christ as the Son of God; the brightness of his Father's glory; and the express image of his person: and who, in the beginning, laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of his hand. And as Christ made the heavens and the earth, it follows, that He is able to accomplish man's redemption. But our hopes are not to rest merely on what He was qualified to do, but on what He has actually performed. And we are told, that this great High Priest of our profession, has purged our sins, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, to appear in the presence of God for us. " Wherefore He is also able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." The illustration of this passage will lead us to consider—the intercession of Christ; the way in which we obtain the benefits of it; and the great extent of those benefits.

I. The intercession of Christ: " *seeing He ever liveth to make inter-*

cession for them." To intercede, is to solicit a favour for another person: when we offer a petition for our own personal advantage, it is called prayer; but when this is done for the benefit of another person it is called intercession. But when we intercede we are not confined to supplication and request; we may make use of every argument, plea, and inducement, which bears upon the case; in order to obtain the desired grace and favour. When it is requisite to make intercession, some crime has been committed, or some offence given, which the injured or offended party, is mindful to resent, either by withholding some bounty, or by inflicting some chastisement. And the design of the intercessor is to allay the strife, procure forgiveness, effect a reconciliation, and restore the offender to favour. The Hebrew word, from which "intercessor" is derived, signifies one who steps in between two contending parties, at the risk of his own personal safety; and who may receive the punishment himself from which he screens another person. One properly qualified for this office is a friend to both parties in the dispute; and in order to make peace and preserve it, he should be able to give indemnity for the past and security for the future.

Mankind have need of an intercessor, because they are become guilty before God: before that Being who is of purer eyes than to behold sin without abhorrence, who is angry with the wicked every day; and will not let sin go unpunished. Previous to a change of heart by divine grace, there is none righteous; no not one: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And every transgressor has lost the Divine favour: and consequently has forfeited all the blessings of creation, and the bounties of Providence, and all title to eternal life: and is exposed to that wrath and fiery indignation which comes on the children of disobedience, and will devour the adversaries. By that divine law which sinners have violated, they are sentenced to everlasting destruction, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And from this dreadful condition they cannot deliver themselves: they have neither inclination nor ability to make compensation for their past offences: they can perform no future obedience that would give them a title to life: for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified. And therefore, if left to their own efforts, they could by no means escape the damnation of hell. And from their extreme perilous and helpless state, arises the urgent necessity of making intercession for them.

And we have the happiness to learn from scripture that this important office is undertaken by one who can discharge it with infinite merit and infallible success. To us there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. Every qualification requisite for an intercessor, our Saviour possessed in the highest degree of excellence. For He was God and man in one person, or, as the Scriptures express it, God manifest in the flesh. With respect to his divine nature, He had a glory with the Father before the world was. He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God. In the beginning He was with God, and was God. Of the same substance as the Father and equal to Him in power and glory. But in his divine nature alone, He could not give himself to be a ransom for sinners: He could not be made an offering for sin; He could have no sufferings and

death to plead in behalf of transgressors. As a qualification for the mediatorial office, it behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren: to partake of our flesh and blood. Hence He took not on Him the nature of angels, but was found in fashion as a man. The Eternal Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; the Deity became incarnate. In this mysterious incarnation, a complete union was formed between the Divine and the human nature; for in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead *substantially*. And as He was perfectly God and man in one person, He was prepared to be a Mediator between the rebellious sons of men and the living God, who is to the wicked a consuming fire. As He became man He possesses our own nature; He is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; He has a tender regard for our welfare; He is touched with a feeling over our infirmities; He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows. As He is God, He has a corresponding influence with the Father; and there is corresponding merit in his works; and He has infinite ability to advocate our cause. He can give full satisfaction for our past offences, and become our security for future obedience. He is, therefore, every way qualified for the mediatorial office.

Respecting our Saviour's intercession, some things are plain and easy to be understood, and others are more mysterious. That He does intercede for us with the Father is a truth clearly revealed, and fully confirmed. He is passed into the heavens to appear in the presence of God for us. If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who ever liveth to make intercession for us. By these and similar declarations of scripture, the fact of his intercession is clearly made known, and incontrovertably established: and it is likewise clearly revealed, that his intercession is of great importance in the concerns of our salvation. All that He did and suffered for us on earth, would be unavailing, if He did not intercede for us in heaven. When He ascended upon high, He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, even the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. The gifts He received were those of the Spirit, which He sheds so abundantly on the Church: and they were procured by his intercession; without this the spirit would not have been given, and without the spirit none could be saved. Consequently his intercession is a subject which is unspeakably interesting and beneficial; and in this light it was regarded by the great apostle. When he speaks of justification in the most triumphant language, and sets all accusers at defiance, he lays peculiar stress on our Savour's intercession. He exclaims, "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." And in the words under consideration, he declares that Christ is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. The discharge of this office gives efficiency to his other works, and makes Him a Saviour all complete; without it He could save none: but with it He can save all that come unto God by Him; without this He could not save in any degree: but with it He can save to the uttermost.

But though both the fact and the importance of this office are clearly stated in the Word of God, yet the manner in which it is performed is

nowhere expressly declared. But it is illustrated by types and figures, and mentioned in such a manner, that we may attain sufficient knowledge of it by inference and analogy. We should be careful that we do not form any erroneous views on this subject. We are not to conceive that Christ's interceding for us, is a mere act of kindness exclusively on his part: yet in other cases, it is natural and reasonable to suppose, that an intercessor has more kindness and compassion towards those for whose benefit He interposes, than the person has who is intreated for them; for otherwise no intercession would be required. But we are not from this to suppose, that the Son of God has more kindness and compassion for the human race than the Father possesses, or that He has less regard to the administration of justice in his moral government; for both the Father and the Son are infinitely merciful, and infinitely just.

When the high priest, under the law, interceded for Israel, he averted the wrath of heaven, and procured the Divine blessing for the people, which otherwise they would not have obtained. But in doing this, he was not more compassionate than the Deity: for his appointment to that office, the acceptance it obtained, and the benefits it procured, were all the result of Divine grace and favour. The Almighty did not need any thing to move Him to compassion; but this was the plan which his wisdom devised, of maintaining the integrity of his perfections, when He extended mercy to the violators of his law; and so it is with respect to our Savour's intercession. The appointment of that office by the Father, and the acceptance and exercise of it by the Son, discover equally in both of them, the same extent of mercy and grace, of love and good will, to men.

We are not to imagine that Christ intercedes merely from a kind regard and tender feelings towards us. Such regard and feeling for us He has beyond our comprehension; but these alone would not induce Him to be our intercessor: his making intercession is an essential branch of his priestly office, which He could not have exercised for us in heaven, if He had not been a priest on earth. The priesthood of our Saviour was predicted by David in the one hundred and tenth Psalm: where he says, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec." And in the chapter before us, the apostle shows that this prediction had its accomplishment in our Redeemer; and he proves at large that Melchizedec was a priest of a superior order to the Jewish priesthood, and in this respect was an emblem of Christ. Melchizedec was appointed to his office on account of the excellence of his character, or personal merit. In office he had no predecessor, companion, or successor; his office was unlimited, both as it respected the persons for whom it was exercised, and as to the time of its duration. He was greater than Abraham, who is termed the friend of God, and the father of the faithful: he was a king as well as a priest: he was king of righteousness, as his name denotes: he was afterwards king of Salem, which signifies king of peace. In these respects he was superior to the Jewish priesthood, and was an eminent type of Christ. For our Saviour did not come into the priesthood by natural descent, but by a special appointment of heaven, on account of his personal excellence and merit. He did not derive his office from any other priest:

He does not share it with any other, nor will He transmit it to any other. He exercises his priesthood for men of all nations, and for all succeeding generations. He was greater than the patriarch Abraham; hence He says, " Before Abraham was, I am." He blessed this patriarch, for Abraham rejoiced to see his day; he saw it and was glad. And without contradiction, the less is blessed of the greater. While He exercised the priesthood, He possessed sovereign authority; the prophet calls Him a priest upon his throne. And He is King of righteousness. He loved righteousness and hated iniquity. He was righteous in his own person, and He fulfilled all righteousness. He rules in righteousness. He brought in an everlasting righteousness, that He might make his people righteous; He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; and it is only the unrighteous that will not have Him to reign over them. He is likewise the King of peace; for He reconciles us to God, and gives us a peace which the world cannot give nor take away. He is therefore a priest after the order of Melchizedec. Thus the apostle proves both the reality and the superiority of his priesthood; and it is in virtue of this office, that He also maketh intercession for us.

But though Christ is a priest of the highest order, He could not intercede for us in heaven, if he had not first offered a sacrifice in the lower world: for this was the method pursued by the priests under the law, and the law was a shadow of good things to come: the tabernacle of Moses was a figure of the true tabernacle above; it was a pattern of things in the heavens; that is, the Jewish services were emblematical representations of what Christ does for us, in procuring our eternal redemption. But the Levitical high priest could not make intercession, till he had first offered a sacrifice for sin: the blood was said to make an atonement for the soul, and he took and sprinkled it in the Holy of Holies, when he interceded for the people. And as this was a pattern of what Christ does for us, it is evident that He could not be our intercessor, if He had not first offered a sacrifice for our sins. And the Scriptures represent his sufferings and death, as a sacrifice to remove our guilt, and restore us to the Divine favour. According to the Prophets, He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: his soul was made an offering for sin. He was cut off, but not for himself, but for the sins of the people. And the apostle tells us, that He appeared in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He says, Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. The Jews had a variety of expiatory sacrifices, and to these our Saviour is compared. In allusion to the scape goat, on which the sins of the people were typically laid, it is said, that Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. In allusion to the daily sacrifices in the temple, He is called the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. And in allusion to the annual sacrifices on the great day of atonement, He is said to be the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. And by the offering of this sacrifice, He was prepared to make intercession.

With respect to the manner in which this intercession is made, it it is to be remembered, that the Levitical high priest, after the sacrifice had been made, did not go into the most holy place *to pray*

for the people; but he took the blood of the sacrifice, and sprinkled it upon the floor, and upon the mercy seat, before the symbols of the Divine presence, which rested between the Cherubim; and this was the process of his intercession, and it distinctly prefigured our Saviour's intercession in heaven. The scripture never speaks of our Saviour using *supplication* for us in the courts above; nor does that seem to be consistent with his state of exaltation; but it declares that He entered into the most holy place; not that made with hands, but into heaven itself; not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, to appear in the presence of God for us. And this is called the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel. Here there is an allusion to what the Lord said unto Cain,—"The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." There was no utterance of speech, but the evidence of the crime, at the bar of justice, virtually pleaded for the punishment of the offender. In like manner, the blood of Christ cries to heaven; and as it was shed for the remission of sins, it pleads for the exercise of mercy and grace to a guilty world. In this way, it is evident, Christ maketh intercession for us. To convince the disciples of his resurrection, He shewed them the marks of the wounds He had received on the cross; and it seems that, in heaven, He shews the tokens of his crucifixion, for He is there represented as the Lamb that had been slain; slain, to redeem us to God by his own precious blood. And by making this appearance in the presence of God for us, He virtually pleads our cause, or, in other words, maketh intercession for us.

"Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary:
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly speak for me:
'Forgive him, O! forgive,' they cry,
'Nor let that ransom'd sinner die.'"

And thus, we see, the blood of Christ speaketh better things than that of Abel; and it is called the blood of sprinkling, not merely in allusion to the method of purification used by the Jews, but likewise, because it was typified by the blood of the sin offering, which the high priest sprinkled on the mercy seat, when he went into the Holy of Holies, to make intercession. And hereby we are taught the *manner* in which our Saviour performs this office.

It does not appear to be requisite for our Saviour to use verbal supplications in heaven, because the prayers He offered up on earth apply to all our necessities, and are still available. During his public ministry, He prayed for sinners, not excepting his murderers. When He hung on the cross, He said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." His praying for sinners, is figuratively represented in the parable of the barren fig-tree; when the owner of the fruitless tree said, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" the dresser of the vineyard replied, "Lord, let it alone this year also." On another occasion, He prayed exclusively for saints. Addressing *his* father and *our* father, He says, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through thy truth, that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in

Thee, that they also may be one in us. I will, that they be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." In these words our Saviour prays that his followers may be preserved from evil; that they may be sanctified; that they may have union with God, and with each other; and that they may be eternally glorified in heaven. And all we want is here expressed: and these prayers will avail as much for us, as they did for his own disciples; for He says, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. Here He prays for believers in all succeeding generations, and it would have been in vain for Him to do this, if his prayers would not retain their efficiency to the end of the world. Therefore the prayers which He offered up on earth are virtually offered up in heaven; they remain like himself, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. They are as beneficial to us as they were to the first Christians; and in this sense He intercedes for us, with all the efficacy of his prayers and supplications.

The intercession of Christ is not to supercede our own prayers, but render them successful. When the Levitical high priest made intercession, he burnt *incense* on the golden altar in the most holy place: and, at the same time, the people were praying in the outward court: and their prayers, ascending with this incense, came up before God with prevalence and acceptance. And according to what was signified by that incense, the merit which the Redeemer presents before the throne in heaven, mingles with the prayers and services of the people, and renders them available and acceptable with God. An emblem of this was represented to St. John in a vision. Another angel, it is said, came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. It is here said that much incense was given to the angel, signifying the exceeding greatness of our Savour's merits in his intercession, and the prayers of saints, united with this incense, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand; signifying that it is through the merits of Christ that our prayers come up with acceptance before God. Having such an high priest, let us come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and grace to help us in time of need.

It may be likewise observed, that when the high priest went into the holy of holies to make intercession, he had on the breast plate, in which were set twelve precious stones, and on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; he was therefore said to have the names of the people upon his heart, as a memorial before God continually. In this manner they were presented before the Almighty, as the objects of his regard, care, and compassion: so by the intercession of Christ, believers are presented in heaven: not one of them is forgotten before God. Christ knows his people by name; and He promises to confess their names before his Father in heaven. The names of the twelve tribes might be engraven on precious stones, to show that believers, when presented by Christ, are precious and honourable in the sight of God; they shall be mine, He says, "when I make up my jewels."

Christ may be said to have the names of the people upon his heart, for

He has loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood. His love to his people surpasses the knowledge of men and of angels. And with infinite kindness and affection He presents them as a memorial before God continually.

The breast plate of the high priest, bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, was fastened by wreathen chains of gold to the shoulder pieces of the Ephod: and, in Scripture, the shoulder is an emblem of power; as were, it is said, the government is upon his shoulder. And our Saviour in his intercession, not only bears up his people with the affection of his heart, but likewise with the strength of his arm. For the exercise of the mediatorial office, there was given unto Him all power in heaven and in earth.

The great power of Christ's intercession is derived from the merit of his sacrifice, which was of infinite value. It was made efficacious by the holiness and dignity of his person: the apostle says, Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. The Jewish sacrifices were but shadows, and could not take away sin: but Christ's sacrifice was the substance, and every way perfect and complete. The Scripture declares that it takes away sin: that it makes reconciliation for iniquity: that it purges the conscience from dead works, and has forever perfected them who are sanctified. Hence, when our Saviour had offered one sacrifice for sin, he forever sat down at the right hand of God, in token of its full perfection and acceptance.

And in proportion to the merit of his sacrifice is the power of his intercession. Therefore it has the nature of a plea on the ground of right: hence He says, Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory. On our part, the blessings of redemption are unmerited and free; but, on the part of our Saviour, they are bought with a price. And when his merit is pleaded, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And as we have so great an high priest, that is passed into the heavens, who has offered so meritorious a sacrifice; who sustains the office of our intercessor, and has all the qualifications for it in the highest perfection; as He has our welfare so much at heart, and has so much right and power to promote it, we may safely confide in the prevalence of his intercession. The apostle placed so much dependance upon it, that it is on this ground he declares, He is able to save to the uttermost.

II. The way in which we obtain the benefits of Christ's intercession: which is by *coming unto God by Him.* This office is exercised for the benefit of the whole human race; under the designation of saints and sinners all are included: and that He intercedes for saints will not be disputed, and the prophet describes Him as making intercession for the transgressors. It has already been proved that He intercedes in virtue of his sacrifice; and when He offered that sacrifice, He gave himself a ransom for all: He tasted death for every man: He gave his life for the world, as the Scripture most clearly and abundantly testifies; and his intercession must of necessity be of equal extent; it is made for the whole offspring of Adam. But the benefits of his intercession will be

ultimately enjoyed by those only who comply with the terms of the Gospel, which are here called, coming unto God by Christ.

To come unto God denotes a previous distance or extrangement. This distance from God is not to be understood in reference to his essential presence, which pervades every part of the universe, and fills immensity: hence the Psalmist says, Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. In this sense of the word, God is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. But in some respects, God may be far from us. When Elijah was seeking to have an interview with Him, there was a great wind, which rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks; but the Lord was not in the wind: there was likewise an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: there was likewise a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: consequently, men may live at a distance from Him. They may not have his gracious presence, which Moses so earnestly solicited for his comfort and support in the wilderness, saying, "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." And in this respect, all the unregenerate are at a distance from God.

They have departed from that likeness to God, in which man was created; they are far gone from original righteousness. Those who live in sin, have not the love of God in them. God is not in all their thoughts; they desire not the knowledge of his ways. The apostle says, "Some have not the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame." This may be spoken to their shame, because it is their own fault, and a vile degradation. And such is the state of all the ungodly; they are alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts. They are far from God by wicked works; they have wandered from the path of duty; they have erred and strayed from God's ways like lost sheep. They have gone out of the way of understanding, and they abide in the congregation of the dead. They have swerved from their allegiance to the King of Heaven, and are in a state of revolt against the divine government. The Almighty declares, He has nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Him. And when men are far from God, destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they know not. The prophet represents them uttering this complaint: We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind; we stumble at noon-day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We look for salvation, but it is far off from us. And the answer to this complaint is, Behold the arm of the Lord is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that He will not hear. Sin separates the soul from God, so as to deprive men of his favour, of spiritual blessings, and heavenly communications, and of all those distinguishing privileges, which belong to the

family of God, and the household of faith; whether these privileges relate to things on earth, or things in heaven. For sinners are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; they are without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world. Therefore, by coming to God, we are to understand a change of heart and life. The design of the Gospel is, to turn men from darkness to light; from the power of sin and Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified. When men begin to turn unto God, they are under conviction; they clearly see the error of their way; they feel they are involved in guilt and condemnation; they are deeply affected with their folly in forsaking the fountain of living waters, and hewing out broken cisterns that can hold no water. They are grieved at heart, when they think of their crimes in general, and their ingratitude to God in particular. They are deeply affected with the wretchedness of a sinful state, and the danger their souls are in of eternal destruction. And in this way they are brought to resolve on a new course of life. David says, I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." The younger son in the parable had taken his journey into a far country; but when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. This represents what is done by every person that repents of his sins, and brings forth fruit meet for repentance. Hence the prophet says, Seek the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. In this passage, such a change of heart and life as is produced by repentance, is called returning to the Lord; and in this way sinners are to *come unto God*. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

In the words before us, we are likewise taught, that the way in which a sinner comes unto God, is through Christ. It is in dependance on the Redeemer's merits that he seeks acceptance with God. Our Saviour, speaking to Thomas, says, I am the way: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. That is, no man can obtain pardon and peace with God, but in virtue of my sacrifice and intercession. Therefore, when sinners obtain the divine favour, they renounce all dependance on their own merits. They see that, without Christ, their own righteousness is as filthy rags; and their holy things have need of cleansing. And by the deeds of the law, no flesh living can be justified. They see that Christ is the only foundation of acceptance with God, and they trust alone to his merits and grace. And this dependance on Christ they acknowledge in their prayers for pardon, and they plead what He has done and suffered for them. And in this way they obtain forgiveness. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. The apostle says, I kept back nothing that was

profitable to you: testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And he testifies the same in the words before us, when he declares, that Christ is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.

By coming unto God we are likewise to understand divine worship. Attendance on the word and the ordinances of religion: prayer, adoration, thanksgiving and praise: and every other act of devotion, is, in the language of scripture, coming to appear before God. David speaks in reference to his devotional exercises, when he says, It is good for me to draw nigh to God. And in the same sense St. James says, "draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." And in this chapter St. Paul calls our devotional exercises, a drawing nigh to God. And elsewhere, he says, Seeing we have a great High Priest, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and grace to help in time of need. Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say his flesh; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with the pure water.

By this we learn that every act of divine worship is coming unto God; and this we are to do through Christ; for through Him we have access by the Spirit unto the Father. In order to perform any acceptable worship or obedience, we must do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Believers are constituted a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. In every act of worship, all our dependance for acceptance with God, must rest on the merits of Christ; and by thus coming unto God by Him, we shall obtain the benefit of his intercession.

III. The great extent of those benefits: "*He is able to save them to the uttermost.*"

And one part of this great salvation is the remission of sins. And this is a blessing of unspeakable magnitude and importance. So long as men remain unforgiven, destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they know not. Without pardon they are excluded from every new covenant blessing, and they cannot escape eternal perdition. But those who obtain the pardon of sin, are entitled to all the unsearchable riches of Gospel grace; they are made the sons of God and heirs of heaven. And as to the pardon of sin, Christ is able to save to the uttermost, all who come unto God by Him. Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. In this respect Christ saves to the uttermost; for the pardon He grants extends to every transgression; it remits every penalty which the guilty had incurred; and makes them as righteous in the eye of the law, as if they had never violated any of its precepts. Christ can pardon sinners, however numerous their crimes are; however henious their sins may be; however long they have been persisted in, or under whatever aggravating circumstances they have been committed. He came into the world to save sinners, even the chief; consequently, He came to save

sinners of every description: old sinners, backsliding sinners, apostates, and the vilest of the human race. He pardoned the Corinthians, who were fornicators, idolators, thieves, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners. He pardoned the thief on the cross, who had persisted in his wickedness to the last hour. He pardoned Peter who had publicly denied Him with profane oaths and curses. He pardoned Paul who was a persecutor and a blasphemer. He commissioned his apostles to preach repentance and remission of sins among all nations. And as to the state of those nations, we are told, that they were filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, and maliciousness: they were full of envy, murder, debate, and malignity: they were backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. There were among them every species of iniquity, and crimes of the deepest die. But none of these crimes were too great to be forgiven. It may be objected, that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven. True, because that crime was a rejection of the remedy, when the last offer of it was made to that generation. But when the remedy which is so amply provided, and so freely offered, meets with acceptance, then all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven. The Saviour of sinners says, He that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out. Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord: Thongh your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. And therefore with respect to the pardon of sin, Christ is able to save to the uttermost.

The blessing of pardon is so perfect and complete, that it is granted without any worthiness on the part of man: for by grace are ye saved, not of works lest any man should boast. And whenever men are prepared to receive it, it is given without delay. Now is the accepted time: behold now is the day of salvation. And when this pardon is granted, it is accompanied with a sure evidence. He that believeth hath the witness in himself. Such are filled with peace and joy in believing; and they can shew forth the praises of Him, who has called them out of darkness, into his marvellous light. And He who can give this blessing, which is every way so perfect and complete, can save to the uttermost.

Another part of this great salvation, is purity of heart and life. Believers are saved by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost: and by this means they are delivered from the power, polution, and practice of iniquity. They are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God; and in this respect Christ is able to save to the utterniost. In the exercise of his grace, which He sheds on us abundantly, He finds no heart too degenerate to be renewed; nor too hard to be softened; nor too proud to be humbled; nor too poluted to be purified. In the human heart, there is no malady which He cannot cure: no corruption which He cannot subdue; no stain which He cannot wash away. In his people He can destroy inbred sin; root and branch: He can renew them in righteousness and true holiness, after the image of Him who created them. He can sanctify his people wholly, body, soul, and spirit: He can adorn them with all the graces of the Spirit, and fill them with the fulness of God. He can give his

people such a holy disposition, that they will neither taste, nor touch, nor handle the thing that is unclean: that they will hate the garments spotted with the flesh: that they will wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb: that they will keep themselves unspotted from the world, and abstain from the very appearance of evil. He can make them so spiritually minded, that they will have their conversation in heaven; so strong in faith, and so perfect in love, that they will bring forth all the fruits of righteousness, which are to the praise and glory of God. He can make them the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and a perverse generation; shining as lights in a benighted land; adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things. So that they will be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and be presented faultless, before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

That Christ is able to save his people, in the manner we have stated, may be proved by the precious promises and gracious declarations of scripture. The general tenor of which is, I will save you from all your unrighteousness: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you: a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. Our Saviour's ability to save in this manner, is a truth which has been confirmed by the experience of his people in all ages: and there are now a cloud of living witnesses, who can testify that old things are passed away, and all are become new: that God has pardoned their sins, and cleansed them from all unrighteousness. They can love God with all their heart, and do all things through Christ strengthening them. That Christ can save his people in this manner, appears also, from the consideration that it was the very design of his sufferings and death. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. He loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word: that He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.

But all this sanctifying and cleansing must take place in the present life. It is requisite as a meetness for heaven: those who stand before the throne above have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. This was done not after, but previous to their dissolution. And what our Saviour did for these, He can do for others; and, therefore, as it respects sanctification, He is able to save to the uttermost. And the same may be affirmed of every other part of salvation.

During the present life our wants are great and numerous, and this would be the case if the earth was our own, and the fulness thereof, and the cattle upon a thousand hills: for our needful supplies can not be obtained from any worldly source. But in this respect Christ is able to save unto the uttermost: for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell: and out of his fulness do we receive, and grace for

grace. Whatever we ask the Father in his name, He will do it for us. Hence the Apostle says, " My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. He is able to do exceedingly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

In the present life believers are weak and feeble, frail and infirm: but Christ is able to save them to the uttermost; for though they can do nothing of themselves, they can do all things through Christ strengthening them. He grants them, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man. The Apostle says, " There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure with the abundance of the revelations. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

In the present life, the people of God are exposed to great dangers and formidable adversaries. They have to wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. But in this respect Christ is able to save them to the uttermost. He will suffer no tempation to happen but what is common to men, and with every temptation He will make a way for their escape, so that they will be able to bear it. When earth and hell make war with them, the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And when there is none besides to help, his own arm will bring salvation. Against our enemies the day of vengeance is in his heart, when the year of his redeeemed is come. He will suffer no weapon formed against his people to prosper, nor any to pluck them out of his hand. He will effectually preserve them from the arrow that flieth through darkness, and from the destruction which destroys at noon day. He will give them the victory over the world, and bruise satan under their feet. Nay, in all these things they are more than conquerors through Him that hath loved them.

In the present life the people of God are often involved in sorrow and affliction: but in this respect Christ is able to save them to the uttermost; when in the world they have tribulation in Him they have peace: in the outward storms of life they enjoy an internal tranquillity, which the world cannot give nor take away. They are so divinely supported, that when they pass through the waters, the waves shall not overflow them; and when they pass through the fire, the flame shall not kindle upon them. So great is their support in trouble that they can glory in tribulation; and count it all joy when they fall into divers temptations; for if they suffer with Christ they shall reign with Him; and they know that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with that glory that shall be revealed. And having this hope, they faint not; for though their outward man perish, their inward man is renewed day by day.

The great ability of Christ to save appears, likewise, by the signal

deliverance which He accomplished for his people in the course of his providence and grace. Many, indeed, are the afflictions of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivereth them. When there appears to be no way for their escape, they can stand still and see the salvation of God. All things are made to work together for their good. In every stage of their progress they can raise their Ebenezer, and in every emergency say, "The Lord will provide." To the end of their journey, He will never leave them nor forsake them; and He will give them the victory over the last enemy. And their persevering grace and triumphant death, will clearly illustrate and fully confirm the declaration that He is able to save them unto the uttermost.

But the great ability of Christ to save unto the uttermost, will be most extensively displayed in a future state. For where He is, there shall his servants be also, that they may behold his glory. They will receive that crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love Him. Having overcome through the blood of the Lamb, they will enter into his joy, and sit down on his throne. This will be a full and final deliverance from all the troubles and conflicts of the present life. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them: there their joy will be full, and unmingled with pain, or fear, or grief. And from the Divine Being, as from a fountain, it will flow perpetually, and throughout eternity, without diminution or interruption. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father, for ever and ever. And this consummate felicity, and this eternal weight of glory, will afford the best comment on these words, "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost."

From the character of our Redeemer, it follows, that if any who live under the Gospel do not obtain the benefits of redemption, it is occasioned by their own unbelief and wilful disobedience. The way of salvation is thrown open to every description of sinners. And with great earnestness and sincerity on the part of heaven, all are called and invited, and every requisite assistance is afforded unto them: and all who come unto God through Christ are graciously received. And, therefore, if any remain destitute of saving grace, the hindrance is all in themselves. To these the Saviour says, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." And if sinners will not come unto Christ, they must inevitably perish in their iniquities. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? Those who continue to neglect it, cannot escape the damnation of hell. But there is now a way to escape; the Saviour who died for sin is now making intercession: the grace of God abounds to the chief of sinners. The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. To-day, then, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, but flee for refuge to the hope set before you.

The character of our great Redeemer affords abundant encouragement to all who desire to be saved. Such may be greatly distressed by a sight of their iniquities: they may dread the wrath of God, and the curse of a broken law: but let them remember, that the Saviour's errand to the

world was to save sinners. Let them look by faith to the Saviour's sacrifice and intercession, and they will see a pardon sealed with blood; a fountain opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness: they will see that there is mercy with God and plenteous redemption: they will see that all things are now ready: they will see that Christ is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God through Him; seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Let those who have come unto God through Christ, remember it is a duty in which they are required to persevere: you are still to draw nigh to God in all his appointed ways; and this is not only your duty, but one of your Gospel privileges, the value of which can never be sufficiently appreciated. The apostle, to show its excellency, contrasts it with the manner in which the Jews entered into covenant with God at Mount Sinai, and says to believers, who have boldness, and access to God through faith in Christ—"Ye are not come unto the Mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire; nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a tempest, and the voice of words; which voice, they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken any more, for they could not endure that which was commanded. But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God; the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and Church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and unto the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. That is, Christians, in Divine worship, have not to come to the terrors of the law, but to the grace of the Gospel; not to the condemning law giver, but to the merciful Saviour. Hence, it is said, "they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Learn, then, to prize your privilege, and live in the constant enjoyment of it. Draw nigh to God in all his ordinances, that your fellowship may be with the Father and with the Son: that you may hold on your way, and in the Lord grow stronger and stronger.

It is of importance for believers to keep the mediatorial office of their Redeemer in remembrance: to meditate on the wisdom by which it was contrived,—the love by which it was produced,—the ability with which it is executed, and all the benefits resulting from it. This will give them the spirit not of fear; but power, of love, and of a sound mind. When they look within the veil, and see their great High Priest ever living to make intercession for them, it will encourage them in all their trials and conflicts, and comfort them in all their tribulations; it will kindle that love which many writers cannot quench, and inspire that hope which is as an anchor to the soul, affording security in all the storms of life. It will enable them to hold fast the beginning of their confidence stedfast unto the end; and to say, in the darkest seasons, and under the most disastrous circumstances, "I will trust, and not be afraid: I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed unto Him against that day." Wherefore, holy brethren,

partakers of the heavenly calling, *consider* the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. And let the life that you live, be by faith in the Son of God, who loved you, and gave Himself for you.

If Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us, we should not live to ourselves, but unto Him that died for us, and rose again: his cause should be near our hearts, and it should be our constant endeavour to promote his honour and interest;—we are not our own, we are bought with a price; therefore all our ransomed powers should be devoted to his service. We should show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, and show that we love Him by keeping his commandments. For this end Christ hath died, and rose, and revived, that He might be the Lord both of the dead and living. Hence all true Christians are devoted to Christ. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

FINIS.

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REPULSED:

IN REPLY TO THE

Rev. Henry Clarke.

BY ABRAHAM SCOTT.

D when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the re, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand;— nd he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.—Acts xviii. 3, 5.

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1823.

Socinian Sophistry

REPULSED.

A PEACEABLE behaviour will not always screen a man, ther from secret injuries, or open hostility. Though I have en careful not to attack the writings of any man living, yet mine ve frequently been attacked, both from the pulpit and the ess: and I have sometimes had to stand forward in my own de- ce; or, in other words, in defence of the truth: and to my sur- se, an obligation of this kind is again laid upon me. Of my esent antagonist I have no knowledge whatever, except what may gathered from his late, and as I suppose, his only publication. om this it appears, that his name is HENRY CLARKE, and that he sides at *Haslingden*, and is an occasional Pastor to a Congrega- n at TODMORDEN, who call themselves *Unitarians*.

This, Mr. CLARKE, as he informs us, has been induced to write seeing several of my Sermons, treating of the Trinity, &c. which peared to him "*to be very weak and inconclusive.*" But if my scourses on the Divinity of Christ, The Atonement, and The inity, are so very weak, and inconclusive, it is pleasing to reflect, at their refutation cannot affect the Doctrines which I have en- avoured to advocate; for after my weak defence is utterly de- olished, the mighty Bulwarks which other writers have raised round ese important Doctrines, may remain unbroken and unassailed. s so many able Treatises have been written in defence of these octrines, how did Mr. CLARKE happen to pass by them all, when entered the field of controversy, and attack only such as are ry weak and inconclusive? Whatever be the result of such an equal contest, it can do him no credit as an author, nor afford y support to the cause in which he has embarked. But what- er were his motives and inducements to write, it is with his per- rmance only, that I am now concerned; and that only so far as respects my own Publications.

Against these Publications, my Opponent has been pleased to alledge, only, "*False reasoning, bold, but unfounded assertions, erroneous representations, low scurrility, and downright self-contradiction;*" and some other faults which he as clearly points out, but for which he will not engage to find a name. After so heavy a charge has been brought against me, to be able to look my readers in the face, it is to be observed, that Mr. CLARKE seems to allow, that these faults partly arise from the Doctrines I have had the misfortune to discuss; for as to myself, he says, I was determined to use fair means, if such could have been made to serve my purpose. And though this may seem but a very small concession in my favour, yet a little thing may help a drowning man; and if this is all that can be saved from the shipwreck of my moral and literary reputation, I ought to make the best of it, and not forfeit the small remnant of credit which he has been pleased to grant. If this is not entirely gratuitous on his part, I shall hope to retain it for the future, by shewing both him and others, that I am still as determined as ever, to try what fair means will do.

In support of his charge, my Opponent commences as follows:—"*False reasoning, of the most dangerous tendency, will be found in the following sentence:*" "'Some boast of expressing their sentiments in the language of Scripture, but this is no criterion of truth; the most erroneous sentiments may be expressed in the language of Scripture—witness the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.'" "*Farewell, then, all Doctrines of Scripture—to contend about you, is useless,*" *&c.* Instead of cool reasoning, which the subject required, we have here nothing but random declamation. Had it not been for such a specimen of his critical skill, it might have been expected to pass as an undeniable truth, that the language of Scripture may be quoted, when the sense of it is perverted; that the mere sound of the words may be in favour of an opinion, when the sense of the passage is the reverse. There is no God, is the language, but not the sense of Scripture. The most indolent and improvident might plead,—Take no thought for to-morrow. It has been said that a man cut off his hand, because he had read,—If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off. It might be pleaded, that the earth is to become one extensive plain, because it is said, that—Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low. By taking figurative language, in a literal sense, Roman Catholics maintain, that bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ. Should a man wish to prove that Christians are allowed to be drunkards, thieves, murderers, and blasphemers, as far as the sound of the words is concerned, he might plead the following apostolical canon,—It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden, than these necessary things; viz. that you abstain from meats offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled

and from fornication. Now, if we are to be guided by the bare expressions of a detached passage, it might be affirmed, that we may safely live in any crimes not mentioned in this place. The devil expressed his sentiments in the language of Scripture, when he tempted Christ in the wilderness; and so do those who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction: These, out of a thousand instances, are sufficient to prove, that men may express erroneous sentiments in the language of Scripture.

But, however contrary to all sense and reason, my Opponent may speak in this place, it might be supposed to be his own opinion, if he had not so plainly contradicted himself in his own Pamphlet. In pages 8, 9, 10, 11, he speaks in the following manner, "In fact, whatever they may say to the contrary; all Christians do themselves reason upon the meaning of Scripture. But, alas! too many condemn every person's reason but their own; and assert, that all those who do not come to the same conclusions as themselves, pervert the word of God, and set reason in opposition to revelation. The Catholic thus condemns the *carnal reason* of the Protestant, because the latter presumes to reason upon the words—"This is my body, and this is my blood;" and by that and other reasoning, conclude they are figurative, and consequently rejects, not merely as unreasonable, but as unscriptural, the Doctrine of Transubstantiation." Respecting the language of Scripture, Mr. C. says, "The whole of what stands connected, must be taken into consideration, in order to arive at just conclusions respecting the meaning of any of its parts. To which, must be added, a close attention to the general drift of the writer, and the main subject he has in view. Thus when Paul says, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly; his faith is accounted for righteousness." Instead of judging of his meaning by the mere sound of the words, we should compare them with what he elsewhere says in reference to the same subject. "God will render to every man according to his deeds: Not the hearers of the law, are just before him; but the doers of the law, shall be justified." Can any candid, impartial mind believe, that the author of the latter sentences, meant to teach, that a man who has merely faith in God, shall be saved, let his actions be what they may? Is it possible for any rational being to conclude, that, when Paul wrote the former sentence, he intended to say in reality, that although a man work not at all, yet if he believe in him who justifies the ungodly, he shall be accounted righteous? "Yet must every one clearly perceive, and readily admit, that so far as the mere sound of the words, considered apart from the object Paul had in view, this is the apparent meaning. Viewed in connection with that object, they assume a totally different appearance." Thus does Mr. C. clearly shew, and fully con-

firm, what I had advanced; viz. that erroneous sentiments may be expressed in the language of Scripture.

He then proceeds to say, "*To the above, only one other instance of false reasoning shall be added.*" "And as these three faculties, the understanding, the memory, and the will, are conceived to constitute one soul, so may three persons, partaking of the same individual nature or essence, constitute one God. This is not brought forward as a proof of the Trinity, but it may serve sufficiently to rescue the Doctrine from the charge of contradiction." The Note in my Sermon, from which the above is selected, is printed with the marks of a quotation, to shew it was not my own: it will be found under the Article—Theology, in the Encyclopedia Perthensis. When the note was introduced, the case under consideration was, that the Doctrine of the Trinity, is not that of Three Persons in One Person, but Three Persons and One God; and to assert, that a thing is three in one respect, and only one in another respect, is not a contradiction; and as an illustration of this point, the note in question was introduced. This purpose it served, and for no other was it wanted; but it was perhaps more applicable and conclusive than I imagined, as it has given Mr. CLARKE so much irritation. He affirms, that "*it will not pass for a tolerable argument, or even common sense, with any but those who are totally unable to distinguish between sense and nonsense.*" As the writers of that work are still living, they are able to answer for themselves. At the same time, it may not be amiss to observe, that to say, these writers were totally unable to distinguish between sense and nonsense, is an assertion which the most "*feeble minded man*" would not have made, had he been careful to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

"*According to Mr. S.*" observes my Opponent, "*the Trinity and the human mind, are completely analogous.*" Let me ask him, when or where, has any thing like this been asserted? As we are informed that God made man in his own image, it is reasonable to suppose that some analogy subsists between them; but that a finite creature, can be completely analogous to his infinite Creator, is what I was never capable of either supposing or asserting. By such flagrant violations of all appearance of truth, Mr. C. cannot fail to convince his readers, that he does not regard what he says, nor whereof he affirms.

"*Much more,*" he says, "*might be added, upon the false reasoning of Mr. S.*" If Mr. C. obtains any credit as a detecter of false reasoning, it must be for what he might have done;—none can be allowed him for what he has done; because in the attempt he has utterly failed. All his power has been exerted; but he has laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought. Of the two

instances of false reasoning, which he has produced, the latter is not mine, and the former I have proved to be strictly correct, as may be seen even by his own rules of interpretation. To what his failure is to be attributed, whether to his inability to distinguish between false reasoning, and that which is true; or to his wilful perversion of what he knows to be true, I shall not take upon me to decide.

"*But we proceed*," says my Opponent, "*to make a few remarks upon his bold, but unfounded assertions.*" "" *The ancient Jews*," " says Mr. S. "" *while they enjoyed the favour af heaven, and possessed the spirit of vision and prophecy, firmly believed and maintained this Doctrine*, [*the Trinity*,] *of this their writings furnish clear and decisive evidence. The ancient Jews made use of various symbols to express their belief, and to illustrate their views of this great mystery. But what proof does Mr. S. adduce? Why he gravely assures us, that the Jews used to make a circle, in the middle of which was the first letter of the word* —JEHOVAH, *thrice repeated. A triangle inscribed with the first letter of the word* JEHOVAH, *and a small circle at each of the angles.*"" Those who read my Sermon on the Trinity, will see what pains Mr. C. has taken to mangle and confuse this Quotation, to prevent it from being understood; knowing that he could not refute any part of it. He proceeds as follows.—"*But anxious to convince us that the Jews were actually Trinitarians, Mr. S. informs us that they pronounced each part of the blessing;* JEHOVAH *bless thee, and keep thee:* JEHOVAH *make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee:* JEHOVAH *lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, with a different accent, with the hand lifted up, and three fingers extended to express a Trinity in the Godhead.*" Here Mr. C. is again incorrect: I do not say they acted in this manner; but I produce a Jewish writer, who declares this was their practice. The point I had to prove was, that the ancient Jews believed in the Trinity; and I produce quotations from Jewish writers, which expressly affirm their belief in this Doctrine; and what other proof could be either expected or desired? I ask Mr. C. if these quotations are to be found in the Jewish writings? Do they clearly express their belief of a Trinity? Did the Jews know what they believed? And is their word to be credited? Let him shew some reason why any of these questions should be answered in the negative; otherwise they are his own assertions, which will be seen by every intelligent reader, to be unfounded. "*But what*," says Mr. C. "*have we to do with tales about circles and triangles?*" In reply to this question, we may observe, that with respect to these symbols of Deity, made by the ancient Jews, we do not say that they were the most proper which could have been devised, nor whether it is

proper to make any emblems to express our views of the God-head; but we affirm that these symbols, taken in conjunction with the express declaration of their use and intent, by those who made them, most decidedly prove, that the ancient Jews believed in the Doctrine of the Trinity. This, Mr. C. is all we have to do; and all we wish to have to do, with these circles and triangles, as I now "*gravely*" tell you, and am never ashamed to speak *gravely* when discussing the most important Doctrines of our holy religion.

Where gravity is considered a fault, Mr. C. will stand clear: as appears by the following sentence: "*By Mr. S's. logic, we might prove, that a* TURKISH BASHAW, *believes in the Trinity because he wears three tails upon one wig.*" When a man, calling himself a Pastor of a Religious Congregation, turns Buffoon, he acts more out of character, than when he speaks gravely. What can Mr. C. expect to gain by this disgusting and despicable attempt to be witty? If the Turks had as little reverence for divine things, as our author, and they were to tell us that they had formed such a symbol of the Deity, because they believed in his Triune existence, we could not by this means prove that they had no such sentiments, however much we might dislike their manner of expressing them. After all, it seems Mr. C. cannot produce any shadow of proof. that my assertion was unfounded, when I said the ancient Jews believed in the Doctrine of the Trinity.

"*The following assertions,*" *says Mr. C.* "*are equally bold and unfounded with the preceding. Hence, to make Christ to be only a man would be to make him the proudest of creatures—the most presumptuous of all impostors. To deny the Divinity of Christ, is taking the most effectual method to extirpate Christianity out of the world. Avowed Infidelity openly assaults the Christian fabric; but Arianism and Socinianism more insidiously sap the foundation.*" Let us now see whether Mr. C. is not as much mistaken, as in the preceding instance, in declaring these assertions unfounded. The first to be noticed is, To make Christ to be only a man, would be to make him the proudest of creatures. Whether there is any foundation for this assertion, is to be determined by his claims. and his actions, what he said of himself and what he required from his followers. He declared himself to be the Root and the Offspring of David:—David's Lord, as well as David's Son:—That he had a glory with the Father, before the world was:—That he was Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. He declared that he did whatever the Father did; and possest whatever the Father possest: that he had the keys of hell and of death. He spake as the Lord of the invisible world, who could give eternal life to whom he pleased. To a prayer addressed to himself, He answered, To-day shalt thou be with me in

Paradise. He told his disciples that he came down from heaven, nd was in heaven, at the time he was on earth; that he would be ith them always, even to the end of the world. My sheep he ays, hear my voice: I know them, and they follow me; and I ive unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, nor shall ny man pluck them out of my hand. He declares that he will aise the dead, and judge the world; prepare mansions for his eople in heaven, and give them a crown of life. He claimed the me faith, love, confidence, and obedience, from his people, which ie Almighty requires. An angel from heaven, would not permit ohn to worship him; but Christ suffered his followers to worship im, and commended their faith, when they exclaimed—My Lord, nd my God! Now, if a mere man could make such claims of upreme power, glory, and dominion, how can we blame the Jews r accusing him of blasphemy, assigning this as a reason—ecause thou being a man, makest thyself God. If a mere man ought it no robbery to be equal with God, it discovers the high-st pitch of pride and presumption. The reader will therefore see at my assertion was well founded.*

Let us, in the next place, consider whether Arians and Soci-ians sap the foundation of the Christian fabric. This fabric is uilt upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ imself being the chief corner-stone. As a Socinian only has ade the objection, the Arians may for the present be left out of ie question. If we believe that Christ was only a man, in what ght can we regard the Apostles and Prophets, who speak as ighly of Christ, as they do of the Almighty? They declare his oings forth have been from everlasting: that he is the same yes-rday, to-day, and for ever: they call him Jehovah, the mighty od, the Lord of Hosts. They inform us, that he laid the foun-ations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands: at by him all things consist; that he fills all things; that he *is* ie brightness of his Father's glory, and the very express image

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* Bold and unfounded as this assertion is stated to be, I suppose it ould be easy to shew that it corresponds with what has been said on ie same subject, by some of the brightest ornaments of the Christian hurch. Take, for instance, the following words of Mr. Wesley, in is Letter to the Monthly Reviewers, "May I ask—if the Son of God is ot *truly divine*, is he divine at all? Is he a little God, or no God at all. f no God at all, how came he to say, "I and my Father are one?"—id any Prophet before, from the beginning of the world, use any one xpression, which could possibly be interpreted as this and other ex-ressions were, by all that heard Jesus speak? And did he ever at-mpt to undeceive them? Be pleased then to let me know, if he was ot God, how do you clear him from being the vilest of men?"

of his Father's person, for in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily: that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth. The heavenly host honour the Lamb that was slain, as they honour the Father, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Now if the Prophets and Apostles have thus given the glory of God, to a creature like ourselves, it is reasonable to conclude, that they did not speak by the inspiration of the Almighty, but from their own wild fancies, and heated imaginations; and there is no dependance to be placed on their testimony. On this principle, Deism will appear preferable to Christianity; our own reason, and the volume of creation, a safer guide, than a book which leads us to pay the highest religious honours and worship to a mere man. When we consult the book of creation, we behold the glory of our great Creator; and in this work we are never told that God commands all the angels to worship a man: that a man put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself; being set forth a propitiation for the sins of the whole world: that a man must save our souls, or they must be lost; for there is no other name by which we can be saved: that a man must either send the Spirit of God from heaven, or it will never come to the world: that a man was in the beginning with God, and this man came in the flesh, and by him were all things created, in heaven and in earth. But if Socinianism be true, all these things are taught in the Scriptures. Therefore, if Christ was no more than a man, we may exclaim, in the words of Mr. CLARKE,—"*Farewell, then, all Doctrines of Scripture, to contend about you, is useless.*" Hence it is evident that Socinians sap the foundation of the Christian fabric; and their writings tend to extirpate the Christian religion out of the world.

In the prosecution of his charge, Mr. CLARKE proceeds as follows —"*Erroneous representations, are found in the following and other sentences. If we renounce the Divinity of Christ, we must relinquish that of the Atonement.—Denying the Divinity of Christ weakens the most powerful motives to a sober, righteous, and godly life.—Denying the Divinity of Christ, would lessen our esteem for the Scriptures.—Another consequence of denying the Divinity of Christ, would be the loss of his moral character. Not one of which allegations is supported by the mere shadow of truth.*" It would appear from this statement, that Mr. CLARKE intends his readers to believe, that I have made these assertions, without assigning any reason for them; but to expose his fraud and falsehood, it is only needful to give a few extracts from the Discourse, where these allegations are made. To shew that a real Atonement depends on the Divinity of Christ, it is observed, that—"If Christ was possessed of the Divine Nature, his sufferings must have been infinitely

meritorious; but had he been only a man, his blood could no more have taken away sin, than the blood of other Martyrs, who preached the same Doctrines to the world, and laid down their lives to confirm the truth of them?

In support of the allegation, that denying the Divinity of Christ, would weaken our inducements to holiness, it is stated, that, "We are inclined to flee from sin, in proportion as we see its evil; and nothing discovers the exceeding sinfulness of sin, so much as the great price which has been paid to make satisfaction for it. One of the most powerful motives to a holy life, is—The Love of God; a principle inspired in our hearts, by his love to us in the gift of his own Son: but if Christ was only a man, his coming into the world could be no extraordinary manifestation of divine love to mankind; and it might have been said, with equal propriety, that God so loved the world, as to give St. Peter or St. Paul. Viewing the subject in this light, it would very much diminish the appearance of God's love to his fallen creatures, and would deprive us of that which principally excites our love to him, which would of course be injurious to morality. To prove that denying the Divinity of Christ, would lessen our esteem for the Scriptures, it is observed, "That we are told the Bible is given by inspiration of God, and is able to make men wise to salvation. But whatever may be said in its praise; Can we retain any regard for it, when we come to know that it gives to a man all the titles and honours of the Most High God: that it attributes to a creature, all the stupendous works of creation, providence, and redemption? To shew, that if we give up the Divinity of Christ, we cannot retain his moral character, it is observed, that, he could not but know, that from what he said of himself, his followers would be in danger of worshipping him as God; yet he was so far from warning them of the danger, that he led them into the fatal snare. Was this any proof of his love to mankind, when he knew that no idolater hath eternal life! Can a man who claims divine honours. be regarded as an example of humility? These among many other reasons, were assigned for what was then asserted. I leave the reader, therefore, to judge what credit is to be given to Mr. C. when he says, that not one of the allegations was supported by the mere shadow of truth. Whatever might be written on this subject, he either could not see a shadow of truth in it, or he would not acknowledge it, unless it tended to degrade the Saviour of the world. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Mr. C. proceeds to make the following charge. "*Low scurrility, is certainly a proper name for the following sen-*

tences. " " *From these considerations, we leave you to judge wha great danger there is in the Antitrinitarian scheme of Religion and what little ground there is to hope for the salvation of such a embrace it. The greatest mystery of all will be, if such can escap the damnation of hell.*" " We certainly required to be told, an to have it possitively affirmed, that scurrility is a proper name fo any thing that can be found in these sentences. After all, we hav only his word for it, which the reader can scarcely be expected t take, against the evidence of his own senses. When a person de clares it will be a mystery if Socinians can escape the damnation o hell, whether his opinion of the case be right or wrong, scurrility i altogether out of the question,

But Mr. C. proceeds to say, " *When men doom their fellow men to eternal perdition for mere differences of opinion, it is a clea proof that they have no fair arguments at hand*" Are we then ne ver to declare, that he that believeth not shall be damned? Doe no difference of opinion, endanger men's salvation? Was Paine Voltaire, Hobbs, and Spinoza, and all other Deists and Atheists as far as sentiments are concerned, in a safe state? If so, why d the Scriptures speak of men bringing in damnable heresies, eve denying the Lord that bought them? Whatever errors men em brace, or whatever part of God's word they reject, they may plea that it is a mere difference of opinion. Should it be said, that thos opinions, only should be condemned, which lead to a wrong practic we reply, that Socinian errors are of this description: for those wh believe that Christ was only a man, can never honour the Son, a they honour the Father. Therefore, whether men will hear or for bear, we must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. W must take care to be clear of the blood of all men, whatever con struction they may put upon the discharge of our duty.

To make one overwhelming charge, Mr. C. proceeds to say " *Downright self-contradiction, will easily be perceived on a com parison of the three succeeding quotations.* " " *The doctrine of th Trinity, Three Persons and One God, an article of faith, needful t be understood as far as it is revealed.—That it is above our com prehension, we acknowledge.—Let us not lean to our own unde standing.*" " *This is saying that we are to comprehend what w cannot comprehend, and to understand without using our unde standing.*" Unless Mr. C. had been so kind as to tell his reader that these quotations contain self-contradictions, they would neve have been able to see them; and after all, if they know what h means, they must " *understand, without using their understan ing*" I would ask Mr. C. If many things are not needful to b known, which after all our inquiries, we cannot fully comprehend Respecting the being of a God, may we not say, it is an Articl

Faith, needful to be understood, as far as it is revealed; and t at the same time acknowledge, that it exceeds our comprehension? We may, by searching, find out God; but we can never nd out the Almighty to perfection. He has made many discoves of himself to the world: but, lo! these are part of his ways; nd how little a portion of him is known! David professes to know mething of God's omnipresence, and omniscience; and, at the me time, exclaims—Such knowledge is too wonderful for me it high, I cannot attain unto it! Here, such a man as Mr. C. ight have charged David with downright self-contradiction, with mprehending what he could not comprehend; and the same harge lies against the Apostle, who speaks of us knowing the love Christ, which passeth knowledge. We may know what is needful, when the whole of a subject is not placed within the compass our comprehension. A mariner may throw his line into the ean, and discover what is needful for his purpose, when he cant find the bottom. Here we know in part; but when that which perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. Till at happy state commences, many Articles of Faith, as well as e Trinity, are needful to be understood, as far as they are reealed, which exceed, in many respects, the limits of our underanding.

In the next charge, Mr. C. seems to allow, that I have not derted reason, till it has first deserted me. He says, "*The fact is, Mr. S. presumes to use reason in all her operations of understanding, judging, and inferring, so far as suits his purpose; and when he will serve that purpose no longer, he ungratefully turns her out f doors, loaded with abuse and execration.*" Now if reason could ot be brought to serve a man's purpose, in any operation of unerstanding, judging, or inferring, I do not know but it would deerve to be fairly turned out of doors: but still it should be done ithout abuse and execration, if any other means will do. That he reader may judge how much of this I have used, in discarding eason, I shall present him with what I have said on the subject. The necessity of a revelation from heaven, will be acknowledged y all Christians; and the necessity of a revelation, shews the inufficiency of human reason, in the concerns of our salvation. We lo not wish either to discourage or to disparage the right use of eason, Divine revelation is no more intended to prevent the use f reason, than the telescope is designed to set aside the use of our yes: at the same time it may be observed, that this instrument is ntended to extend our view to those objects which the naked eye ould not reach; and to those who will regard nothing beyond he reach of the naked eye, that instrument must be useless. So livine revelation is intended to extend our view, to objects which he heart of man has not conceived; but it must be useless to uch as will not suffer it to carry them beyond the reach of their

own reason." This is the substance of what I said respecting rea son; and those who cannot find abuse and execration in what i here stated, will not find it in any thing else I have advanced on th subject. It appears, therefore, that Mr. C. has turned truth out of doors, because it would not suit his purpose in the defenc of Socinianism.

My Opponent leaves his charges against me to vindicate an supply the defects of their own Commentators. "*All who know nothing*, he says, *about Antitrinitarian interpreters of Scripture but what they learn from Mr. S. will conclude that those interpre tations are worse than childish,*" This may be true; and many who know more about them, than what they learn from me, be lieve them to be as much worse than childish, as the poison and subtilty of the old serpent, is worse than the simplicity of the dove But this is not intended in every respect, to apply to Mr. C, for whatever poison he may possess, subtilty does not appear to have been any ingredient in his composition. Socinians deny the per sonality of the Holy Spirit, but are a little perplexed when they attempt to reconcile the Scriptures with any other supposition for it is much easier to object, than to explain; to pull down, than to build up. They have frequently said, that the power of God is to be understood by the Spirit; but I have shewn that this can not be the sense of many passages where the Spirit is mentioned Feeling the force of this, Mr. C. draws back, but it is only to take his stand on firmer ground; to give such an exposition of what they mean by the Spirit, as none can refute. Whatever wrong no tions people may imbibe on this subject, he says, "*It is more than probable that opinion would be completely altered, should they learn that the advocates of the impersonality of the Holy Ghost, do not understand it to be the power, or wisdom, or any other attribute of God, abstractly considered, nor a distinct person in the Godhead but the Spirit of God himself.*" After such an explicit declaration, so clear and ample a comment, it is to be hoped the matter will be set to rest for the future; since we are now told, once for all, that by the Spirit of God. they mean the Spirit of God. We wish that both Mr. C. and all other Socinian writers, would constantly pursue this method in commenting on the Scripture, and then if they did no good, they would do no harm; and whatever merit there was in the discovery of this rule of interpretation, nothing can be easier than the use of it, now that is once found out. For whatever be the subject of discussion, they may say it is what it is, without any fear of contradiction.

Mr. C. aware of the strong force he had in reserve, before he brings it into action, laughs at all the opposition which is so soon to be crushed, and ironically exclaims, "*Poor Antrinitarians,*

hat will you do now?" We can perhaps tell what they ought to o. If they are in a great straight, they should employ Ir. C. to vindicate their cause. The greatness of their difficulies may cause his controversal talents to be more highly rated, than hey otherwise would be; for the price of commodities is often ound to advance in proportion to the demand. Hence, when Samaria was besieged, an ass's head sold for four-score pieces of silver; and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung, for five pieces f silver.

Mr. C. however, can be serious when he will; and my answer would have been different to what it is, if he had in general indicated his own cause with as much plausibility, as he has done the next article, which is as follows:—"*To prove Christ's Deity, Ir. S. says, He wrought miracles in his own name.—Mr. S. is here at ssue with Christ himself. Let us now hear what Christ says upon the ubject, in whose name he asserts the miracles to have been wrought; and hen we shall be able to judge whether Christ or Mr. S. ought to be beieved. The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of ie. I can of my ownself do nothing.——After such an asseveration as the bove, made in direct opposition to the solemn assertion of Christ, nohing which Mr. S. can say, will astonish us.*" Here Mr. C. has more he appearance of having the advantage, than in any thing else he as written; and he is not to be blamed for endeavouring to make he best of it. If the assertion I have made, cannot be fairly deended, it must be relinquished; and if the latter plan be adopted, will appear, that instead of a support to the doctrine in question, I have added an incumberance, which may be removed without any injury to the building itself: and it is well when any incumberance is removed from such an edifice, whether it be done y the hand of a friend, or an enemy. What is indefensible, is ot always inexcusable. Were I disposed to make any excuse, might plead, that the assertion I have made, corresponds with vhat our most judicious and approved Divines have said on the ame subject. Dr. DWIGHT says,—"As Christ wrought miracles a his own name, he was thus proved to possess the power in himelf as an inherent energy." Mr. HARRIS says, that Christ 'Shewed his dominion over universal nature; the winds, and the eas obeyed his voice. He spake as never man spake; and as one aving authority; so he acted in his own name in what he did." Now, if I have expressed myself in the same manner in which the nost approved Divines have generally done on the same subject, vhere is the cause of so much astonishment?

But let us see whether reason and scripture will not prove he truth of this declaration, That Christ wrought miracles in his wn name. It is true, that Christ wrought miracles in his Faher's name; but that is no proof that he did not likewise perform

them in his own name. When he said, I can of mine own-se do nothing, he did not say, that he did nothing in union wit the Father. He said, All things which the Father hath is min Hence we learn, that though he did nothing exclusive of the Fa ther's authority, yet he did nothing in which his own authorit was not included. When the Jews blamed him for healing t impotent man on the Sabbath-day, he justified himself by this r markable declaration, My Father worketh hitherto, and I worl Here his own authority is acknowledged, as well as that of th Father. At this the Jews sought to kill him, because he mad himself equal with God. Notwithstanding this, he proceeds t say, that he does all things which the Father does; that he ha life in himself, even as the Father has life in himself: that as th Father giveth life to whom he pleases, so does the Son: that it the will of the Father, that all men should honour the Son, eve as they honour the Father; that those who do not honour the Son do not honour the Father. This shews that he wrought miracle in his own name, as well as in the name the Father.

If Christ never wrought miracles in his own name, how wa it that he permitted others, and authorized them to do these works i his name? John said, Master, we saw one casting out devils i thy name. and we forbad him, because he followed not us: Bu Jesus said, forbid him not; for there is no man that doth a mira cle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. He likewis declared that his followers should cast out devils in his nam Accordingly the Apostles acknowledged his authority in the mira cles they wrought. Peter said to the lame man, In the name Jesus, rise up, and walk. Now when he authorized the Apostle to work miracles in his name, it was taking the same honour t himself, as we ascribe to him, in saying that he wrought miracl in his own name; and as he incontestibly did the one, no reason i the world can be assigned, why he should not do the other.

Moses wrought many miracles; but the Apostle, speakin of the High Priest of our profession, says, He was counted worth of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he that buildeth the hous has more honour than the house. For every house is builded b some man; but he that buildeth all things, is God. And Mos verily was faithful in all his house as a servant. but Christ as Son over his own house. Here the superior glory ascribed t Christ, is not stated as belonging to him, because he had do greater works than Moses; but because Moses acted as a servan and Christ as a son over his own house; an evident proof that h acted by his own authority, as well as by the authority of the F ther. When the Apostles wrought miracles in the name of Chris

we are not to suppose that the Father's authority was excluded. So when Christ performed works in his Father's name, we are not to suppose that this excluded his own authority. When he will come in the clouds of heaven, to raise the dead, and judge the world; he declares it will be in the glory of the Father, and in his own glory. So in some measure he came before: hence he said, He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: I and my Father are one. We are therefore authorised to say, that Christ wrought miracles in his own name.

Mr. C. finds matter for astonishment, in the following sentences: "*All power being given to Christ, implies, that he possest a previous capacity for its reception.*" And he thinks the following question may here be asked. "*Does the circumstance of a thing being given, prove that he to whom it was given possessed a previous capacity for its reception?*" To this we may answer, that sometimes it does, but not always; and therefore in any particular instance, it must be determined by the circumstances of the case. Food may be given to a man, but not to a stone, because the former only has a capacity for its reception. Vessels of all dimensions may be filled; but the quantity each receives, is according to its previous capacity. It pleased the Father, that in Christ should all fulness dwell; but in a creature there had not been room to contain it. When Christ says. All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth, can we suppose it is possible for a creature to be made as powerful as his Creator? If Christ had not been God, as well as man, the mighty concerns of our salvation, could not have been lodged in his hands. The redemption of a lost world, was too great a work, and too great an honour, for any creature in heaven, or on earth. The word—Power, in this place, may be taken for Authority, and this can be given in no instance but where there is a previous capacity for its reception. Nor does the word *given*, when it comes to be properly understood, imply that he was not in previous possession of Almighty Power.

"When it is objected to us, All power is given to Jesus, therefore he is not God;—we reply, All power is given to Jesus, therefore he is God. We prove our conclusion thus. The gift of all power in heaven and in earth, either means, in the sense of our opponents, the gift of an Empire to govern; or the gift of ability to govern it. The first alone is impracticable, the last is impossible: for the exercise of all power in heaven and in earth, requires an infinity of perfections. The Governor of all worlds, must be in all worlds at the same time; he must maintain the order of his empire, by an universal pervading action; by an ubiquity proper to God, and incommunicable to creatures. The word, rendered---give, is equivocal: our opponents take it for the conferring of a

right; we take it for the acknowledgement of a right. What fine inference is this: Magistrates, give glory and strength unt Jehovah: therefore Jehovah is not God; at most he is only a su bordinate God, for he derives glory and strength from Magistrates All power is given unto me, said our Redeemer: that is, all hea ven allow what the Jews deny, that I am Lord of all. The Fa ther hath given me power over all flesh; that is, The Father al lows and approves of my right as God, and he has constituted th display of it in me,—Jesus, the man."

According to Mr. C. another declaration, which would hav excited the utter astonishment of every reader, if all possibility o astonishment had not been previously taken away, is the following "*This most venerable name, (Jehovah), which occurs thousands o times in the Old Testament, almost in every instance belongs t Christ.*" Let Mr. C. if he can, prove that it does not. But he pro ceeds to say, "*Mr. S. seems to think that very little notice is taken i the Old Testament, of the other Jehovah: the name belonging almos in every instance to Christ.*" This is altogether a mistake; be cause most frequently where the name Jehovah belongs to Christ it equally belongs to the Father at the same time. For instance Isaiah vi. 1, 3. "In the year that Uzziah died, I saw Jehovah sitting on his throne, high, and lifted up; and his train filled th temple; and one of the Seraphims cried to another, and said, Ho ly, Holy, Holy, is Jehovah of Hosts." In this chapter the nam Jehovah is used six times in twelve verses. And when St. John quotes the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter, he says, Thus spak Esaias, when he saw the glory of Christ, and spake of him. Now according to the decision of the Evangelist, when the Prophet saw the glory of Jehovah, he saw the glory of Christ; yet we are not to suppose that the glory of the Father was excluded. To give another instance, Isaiah viii. 13, 14.---Sanctify Jehovah of Hosts and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread: and he shall be for a sanctuary: but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both houses of Israel. This passage is, in the New Testament, applied to Christ. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8,: but at the same time the Father is not excluded.

To shew how frequently the term Jehovah, is applied to Christ, would exceed our present limits; but in multitudes of pas sages, rendered—Lord, in our version, it is Jehovah in the origi nal. We are told that a man wrestled with Jacob; but we are given to understand that he was not a man only, for Jacob having prevailed with him, was said to have power with God, and to have seen God face to face: and the same Divine Being, is called Je hovah, by the Prophet Hosea: The following are his words. He (that is, Jacob), had power with God; yea, he had power over the

Angel. and prevailed. He wept and made supplication unto him. He found him in Bethel; and there he spake with us, even Jehovah, God of Hosts. "This man, therefore, of the Book of Genesis, this Angel of Hosea, who wrestled with Jacob, could be no other than the Jehovah-Angel, of whom we so often read in the English version, under the name of the Angel of the Lord. A phrase of an unfortunate structure, and so ill conformed to the original, that it is to be feared, it has led many into the error of conceiving of the Lord as of one person, and the Angel as another. The word of the Hebrew, ill rendered the Lord, is not like the English word, an appellative, expressing rank, or condition: but it is the proper name Jehovah. And this proper name Jehovah, is not, in the Hebrew, a genitive after the noun substantive. Angel, as the English represent it, but the words Jehovah and Angel, are two substantive nouns in opposition; both speaking of the same person, the one by the appropriate name of the essence; the other by a title of office. Jehovah Angel, would be a better rendering. The Jehovah Angel of the Old Testament, is no other than He, who in the fulness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, says the Apostle, the glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

We have now done with Mr. CLARKE'S charges of—"*False reasoning, bold, but unfounded assertions, erroneous representations, low scurrility, and downright self-contradiction:*" and it appears, that he has not been able to support any one of these charges with the least shadow of truth, if we except what he says against the miracles of Christ being wrought in his own name; and even this, is found upon examination, to be only the shadow, and not the truth itself. The other part of his work not relating to me, I have not thought worthy of notice; it will soon sink in the sea of oblivion, without the trouble of tying a mill-stone about its neck. The doctrines he assails are founded upon a rock, and the gates of hell will not be able to prevail against them.

We have seen how Mr. CLARKE fails in supporting his charges against other communities, and he succeeds no better in the commendations he gives his own. "*It is the pride,*" he says, "*of Unitarianism, that it never leads its advocates to condemn those who differ from them.*" If this be the case, he must himself be a very degenerate branch; for so much virulence, and unfounded calumny as his Pamphlet contains, it is to be hoped, for the sake of humanity, can scarcely be found any where-else in the same number of pages. But with respect to their not condemning others, it is to be remembered, that they set out by declaring, that men are not to be condemned for a difference of opinion; and so long as they abide by this declaration, they cannot

condemn others in express terms, however willing they may be yet at the same time they say what amounts to their condemnation. BELSHAM pronounces the system, of which the worship of Christ is a leading principle, "*a mischievous compound of impiety and idolatry.*" By this means he as effectually condemns the persons intended, as if he had mentioned hell and damnation. Mr. CLARKE does not seem to think any better of those who differ from him: for he says, "*To come to the Scriptures, with the expectation of supernatural assistance to understand them, is to banish reason, to shut the eyes to the clearest evidence of truth.*" This is in effect to pronounce anathema on all other denominations: for the people who know not the law are accursed. Hence it appears, that Socinian charity in not condemning others, resembles that which is exercised by the Holy Fathers of the Inquisition, who do not commit heretics to the flames, but only give them over to the secular power.

When Mr. C. condemns all those who expect assistance from the Spirit, in understanding the Scriptures, we believe he is completely consistent with his own system; which shews how opposite that system is to real Christianity. What is here stated respecting the Spirit, amounts to a total denial of the Spirit's influence, both in the conversion of sinners, and in the subsequent life of believers: for if the Spirit never shines into our dark hearts, we can have no evidence that we are in any respect the subjects of its operations. But if the Spirit ever does illuminate our minds, we have reason to expect its aid in understanding the Scriptures. We have no need, nor any reason to expect, any new revelation; but we have need of assistance in understanding the truth of God's word; not because this truth is obscure, but because we are dull of apprehension. The light shines clearly, but our spiritual eyesight is dim; there is often a vail upon the human heart. Christ opened the understandings of his disciples, that they might understand the Scriptures. This is what we have reason to expect the Spirit to do for us, and may pray with David, Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy law. Or with St. Paul, That God would grant us the spirit of wisdom, that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened: and if men who are evil, know how to give good things to their children, how much more will our Heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Christ promised to send his Holy Spirit to abide with his church; and the Scriptures inform us what is the work of the Spirit. Believers are born of the Spirit, they are led by the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit. They are washed, they are justified, they are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. The Spirit gives them life, strength, and consolation. It assists them in prayer, witnesses their adoption, sheds the love of God abroad in their hearts, and

seals them to the day of redemption. It appears that the Spirit s often opposed in its operations; for we read of men resisting the Spirit, grieving the Spirit, and quenching the Spirit. The Spirit s promised as an universal blessing: I will pour out my Spirit, says the Almighty, upon all flesh; and our Saviour made no exception when he said, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. Now when we compare the scriptural doctrine of the Spirit, with Socinianism, we may say as Mr. CLARKE does on another occasion, that, "*Light and darkness are not more dissimilar: intense heat, and extreme cold, not more unlike: truth and falshood, wot more opposite, than are these doctrines.*"

We would by no means insinuate, that Mr. C. denies the assistance of the Spirit without assigning a reason for so doing. For these reasons he has laid before the public, that they may judge how clearly *he* sees his way, while others "*banish reason, and shut their eyes to the clearest evidence of truth.*" "*The fact*, he says, *that persons holding opinions so diverse from each other, have pretended to divine illumination, and supernatural teaching, clearly demonstrates, that none of them were so taught.*" That is, because men differ in their opinions, none of them can be right; because there is counterfeit coin, there is none that is genuine. So reasons his great adept in Socinian logic: we need not wonder that other men's reasoning should appear weak and inconclusive, to so great a prodigy of ratiocination.

If Socinians could get fairly rid of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, their system would be more uniform and complete, more consistent and intelligible. Their pretentions to Christianity, oblige them, in quoting the Scriptures, to speak in the highest terms of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; and after all, they have nothing for them to do in the redemption of the world, which might not have been done as well without them. This leaves their system disfigured, and distorted. To expect any assistance from the Spirit, in understanding the Scriptures, we are told, is to banish reason; and those who prove this position, can prove with the same effect, and with as much facility, that to expect the aid of the Spirit in any other religious duty, is to shut our eyes to the clearest evidence of truth. And they have evidently as little need of Christ, as they have of the Spirit. In the case of a sinner's justification, for instance, they tell us there was no need of any propitiatory sacrifice, either to answer the demands of the law, or to make satisfaction to injured justice; for the pardon of sin is obtained through the free and unpurchased goodness of the Almighty Father alone. Now if the remission of sins could have been obtained without the shedding of the Saviour's blood, every other part of a sinner's salvation could have been obtained without it, and therefore Christ is dead in vain. But yet, for form's sake

they admit the name of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, into their discourses, and use such phrases; as Christ putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself; dying the just for the unjust, to bring us to God; bearing our iniquities in his body on the tree, that by his stripes we might be healed. And respecting the Spirit, they do not fail to say, that we are sanctified by the Spirit of our God; that we are saved by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. They have then to take away all the sense and meaning of these passages, which leaves such chasms and voids as nothing can fill up. This not only gives them a great deal of trouble to no purpose, but leaves their system miserably mangled and defaced. Instead of the pure religion of nature, which their hearts seem to be so much set upon, they are left with a discordant medley upon their hands, which Scripture disowns, and reason abhors. Should they plead, that though they are sensible they could do better without the offices of Christ, and the operations of the Spirit, yet they mention such phrases, because they occur in the Scriptures; but are careful, at the same time, to take away the sense of these passages, and leave only the shadow, and not the substance. I would beg leave to remind them, that shadows may frighten children, and so many shadows may obscure the brilliancy of their other tenets; and would submit it to their candour to judge, whether puting themselves to so much inconvenience, is not paying more deference to the Scriptures, than upon their own avowed principles, the Scriptures deserve. For the Scriptures, they tell us, are not the dictates of God's Holy Spirit, they *"Are nothing more than the writings of honest men, who wrote as they thought, and might very often mistake the truth."* So that the Scriptures are not to be regarded as the infallable testimony of God, but the opinions of frail men, who spake at random; and as Dr. PRIESTLEY says, reasoned inconclusively. Admiting all this, why do they give themselves so much trouble to reconcile the Scriptures to their system, which after all they can never accomplish? Let them discard the Scriptures at once, and then their reasoning powers, of which they boast so much, will shine out in all their splendour, and they may gain the reputation of acting with some honesty and consistency.

Mr. CLARKE would have us to believe, that they vindicate their cause, without any evasion, or indirect methods: he says, *"Were Unitarians driven to such shifts as these, in supporting their system, what a clamour would Mr. S. raise: of what puerility and unreasonableness, would he not say they were guilty?"* Mr. C. may here be reminded, that all my shifts have escaped his penetration; but if our limits permitted, it would be no difficult task to point out the shifts to which Socinians have recourse. Is it not a shift in Socinians, to make a boast of expressing their sentiments in the language of Scripture, and to call upon us to do the

ame; by this means they may delude the simple: yet nothing can be
ore evasive and fallacious; for they cannot express all their religi-
us sentiments in the language of Scripture, and other Denominations
an do this in part. When Socinians have to tell us that there is one
od, and that Christ was a man, they can express their sentiments
the language of Scripture, and clearly prove what they assert;
ut as these are points in which we are all agreed, they ought not
be introduced into the controversy; and when they come to
ose subjects in which they differ from us, they have then to
othe their sentiments in their own language. When they wish to
rove that God is one person only, that Christ was only a man,
d the Holy Ghost not a distinct person, then they cannot find
en the language of a single detached passage to serve their pur-
se. If they should only receive one part out of ten of the Bi-
le, they might so far express their sentiments in the language of
ripture; but when they should come to assign their reasons for
hat they had rejected, they would find themselves at a loss. As
e Almighty has given us our reason, he requires us to use it;
d in many cases to believe what is implied, as well as what is
pressed, in Scripture. The Saducees might have given Christ
e Five Books of Moses, and requested him to prove the Resur-
ction by some express declaration; but as they had not the
frontery of Unitarians, they were put to silence by the inferences
ich our Saviour drew from the Scriptures. The Sabbatarians
ight say, we can prove our opinions by the words of Scripture.
e Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. Can you
ove, by the same means, that the First Day of the Week is the
bbath? and we should have to confess that we could not prove
e latter by any express declaration: yet we believe, and can as-
n our reasons for believing, that it has the sanction sf the Chris-
an Code.

When we are called upon to pove the Doctrine of the
e Trinity, by the Scriptures, we reply, that it is not the word
contend for, but the thing signified. In the Scriptures we
d express mention of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
ch of these is called God, and has the highest titles which can
given to the Deity.—Each of these is said to be Eternal, Al-
ghty, and Unchangeable, to have made, preserved, and redeem-
the world —Each of these receives the highest worship, adora-
n, thanksgiving, and praise.—Each of these is said to dwell in
lievers, to sanctify, guide, and support them; and to give that
w, by which they are governed, and by which they are to be
lged. They are mentioned as distinct Persons, as we may in-
nce in the office of Baptism, and in the Christian Benediction;
t the same Scripture informs us, there is only one God. Now,
coming to a conclusion on this important subject, there is no-
ng easier than to take one part of Scripture testimony, and re-
t the other; and in this case, the conclusion we come to, will de-

pend on the part we take. If we take one side, we may conclude ther are three Gods; if we take the other side, we may conclude, tha God is one Person only; but if we go upon the plan of embrac ing the whole truth, and of reconciling one part of Scripture wit another, the only rational conclusion we can come to, is that o three Persons, and one God. Did we not come to this conclu sion, we might be justly charged with banishing reason, and wit shutting our eyes to the clearest evidence of truth.

Mr. CLARKE was put to his shifts when he pretended to giv an out-line of the two systems in opposite columns, on the sam page, to shew that one was scriptural, and the other unscriptural Because the opinions he attributes to Trinitarians, placed ove against the passages which he ranks on his own side, are not thei comments on these passages only, but of other passages which h keeps out of sight. For instance, he puts down on his own side —"*There is but one God:*" on the opposite side, under Trinitari anism, are the following words,—"*Three Persons, and One God.*' But this is not a Trinitarian opinion, formed from any passag which he has placed on his own side, it is the result of all whic the Scriptures say on the subject. We can easily see throug such shifts as these, and beyond them discover the nakedness o the land, which they were intended to conseal.

To give a proper comparison of the two systems, when text is quoted, on which one party places any dependance in th controversy, over against it should be placed the corresponding opinion of the other party, in the following manner.—

Trinitarians believe—

1. That, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, John i. 1.

2. That, The Angel said to Mary, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also, that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God, Luke ii. 35.

3. That, Christ was before all things, Col. i. 17. That his go- ings forth have been from of old, from everlasting, Mic. v. 2. That he had a glory with the Father, before the world was, John xvii. 5.

Socinians believe—

I. That, Christ was in the be ginning of the gospel dispensa tion, and was only a man.

2. That, Christ came into th world in the manner of othe men, and was as much the so of Joseph as he was of Mary.

3. That, Christ had no exist ence before he came into th world.

4. That, Christ was in the orld, and the world was made y him, John i. 10. All things ere made by him, and without im, was not any thing made hat was made, verse 3. For by im were all things created, that re in heaven, and that are in arth, Col. i. 16,

5, That, Christ filleth all hings: filleth all in all, Eph. iv. 0. i. 22. Where two or three re gathered together in my ame, there am I in the midst f them, Matt. xviii. 20. No an hath ascended up to hea- en; but he that came down om heaven, even the Son of an which is in heaven, John i. 13.

6. That, they stoned Stephen, alling upon God, and saying, ord Jesus, receive my spirit, cts vii. 59.

7. That, Christ was wounded r our transgressions, bruised r our iniquities: the chastise- ent of our peace was upon m, and with his stripes we are ealed, Isaiah liii. 5. That he ed for our sins; and we are stified by his blood, 1 Cor. 7. 3. Rom. v. 9.

8. That, Christ is our Advocate th the Father, 1 John ii. 1. That e ever liveth to make inter- ces- on for us, Heb. vii. 25.

9. That, the people of God joy the influences of the Spi- , because our Saviour has de- ared, that, Except a man be rn of the Spirit, he cannot en-

4. That, as Christ was only a man, and had no existence before he came into the world, he could not have been the Creator of any thing; either in heaven, or in earth.

5. That, He was once on earth, and is now in heaven, they are ready to grant; but being a mere man, he can only be in one place at the same time. And rather than believe that he said, he came down from heaven, and was in heaven at the time he was speaking, they could sooner believe, as Dr. PRIESTLEY says, that the old Apostle was nodding when he wrote this passage, or that he dictated one thing, and his amanuensis wrote another.

6. That, no prayer should be addressed to Christ, because he was only a man.

7. That, the death of Christ is not the procuring cause of a sinner's justification; that there was no merit in his blood to procure the forgiveness of sins.

8. That, intercession does not signify intercession, but some unknown benefit, of which we can form no conception.

9. That, all pretention to the Spirit in the present day, is enthusiasm. To expect the aid of the Spirit in understanding the Scriptures, is to banish reason,

ter the kingdom of God, John iii. 5. And St. Paul says, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

10. That, at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, in earth and heaven, Phil. ii. 10. The disciples worshipped him, Matt. xxviii. 17. They worship him in heaven, Rev. v. 11—13.

and shut our eyes to the clearest evidence of truth.

10. That, those who worship Christ, are guilty of idolatry.

From what has now been stated, the reader may judge which of the two systems is most agreeable to the Word of God; and likewise what to think of Mr. C's. declaration, that—"*Trinitarians cannot express their sentiments in the language of Scripture, but Unitarians can express their sentiments in the very words of Scripture.*"

As Mr. CLARKE declares the Unitarians are never put to their shifts, We ask him what induced them to publish their New Version of the Scriptures, under the name of ARCHBISHOP NEWCOME? On this subject, Dr, MAGEE speaks as follows: "Was it from a principle of justice to the Primate, that they first announced his Translation as their model, and then departed from it whenever it suited their convenience: that they abide by the Primate just so long as he abides by them; following him in all matters that are perfectly indifferent, but utterly disregarding him in all those in which their peculiar opinions are concerned; until at length, even by the confession of their vindicator himself, nearly one-tenth of this New Version is found to differ from that which it professes to follow? And this they call making one Translation, the basis of the other; and this entitles them, nay, compels them, under the imperious demand of honour and honesty, to spread the name of ARCHBISHOP NEWCOME, in large characters, over the title-page of their Book; to impress the reader with the belief, that he is, in substance, at least, perusing the Primate's New Testament, when he is perusing one purposely contrived to empty it of every Doctrine which the Primate deemed essential to Christianity. The name of a Bishop of the Established Church, was calculated to lull suspicion, and to contribute to a more extended circulation. They have thus contrived to give a respectable name to their Unitarian blasphemies. They thus hold out deceitful colours to the unwary, and vend their poisons under a false label."

I would likewise ask Mr. CLARKE, whether they have not been some times put to their shifts in translating some passages of

scripture, and in the comments they have put upon them. It has been supposed that this has been the case, as appears by what follows. "It is a leading and determined purpose of Dr. PRIESTLEY'S Notes, to serve the cause of what is arrogantly termed Unitarianism. If he meets with a passage, whose indubitable reading, and whose obvious, plain meaning, are such as every unbiassed man would pronounce favourable to the Deity and Atonement of Christ; the Dr. is ready with ample stores of metaphorical, enigmatical, and idiomatical forms of interpretation; and stubborn must be that text, which will not bend under one or other of his modes of treatment. In some cases, a various reading though none of the best, is called to his assistance, Should his aid fail, some learned critic or other is at hand, with a conjectural alteration. Or if none of these means appear advisable, the philosophical commentator has, in reserve, a kind of logical alkali, which will at least nutralize a pungent passage; for example, the sage observation,—About the interpretation of it, critics differ much. And, lastly, in very desperate instances, a method is resorted to, the most simple and compendious imaginable; and that is to say nothing at all about them. Commenting on John xiv. 2.—In my Father's house are many mansions, he says,—Perhaps with a learned friend of mine, we may understand the mansions in his Father's house, of which Jesus here speaks, to signify not places of rest and happiness in heaven, but stations of trust and usefulness upon earth; such as he was then about to quit, &c. Here the house of God is made to mean earth, mansions, stations; and Christ, of course, was going away, to prepare a place for his apostles here, where he and they then were; and was to come again, to receive them in the place, whither he himself was going, that they might be with him there by continuing here."

"The Unitarian mode of interpreting Scripture, is first, to declare that a thing cannot be. Then comes Scripture, in plain words, declaring that it is. But then comes forward a dictum of Priestley, or Evanson, or Lindsey, or Wakefield, or Cappe, or Belsham, by some different translation, or punctuation, on some new and ingenious mode of interpretation, or some-body else, to assert that the words *may* be made to bear some other *possible* meaning, but should all these fail, should the words be too plain, and simple, and precise, to admit any sort of distortion, then they are clearly to be rejected as spurious, because the Unitarians have already determined that the thing cannot be." Dr. CARPENTER, yielding to the force of over-bearing evidence, admits that the passage in Luke i. 35. must be received as genuine; but denies, that it intimates any thing whatever of a miraculous conception. BELSHAM acknowledges, that it clearly describes the miraculous conception, and therefore rejects the passage altogether.

Acts vii. 59, 60. we find St. Stephen addressing his prayers

to Jesus Christ. On this passage, the Unitarian expositors say "*This address of St. Stephen to Jesus, when he actually saw him does not authorize us to offer prayers to him, now he is invisible:*" —And for further explanation, they refer to Mr. LINDSEY, who states the matter thus: "*Unquestionably Stephen addressed this prayer to the Lord Jesus. But this can be no precedent for directing prayer to him unseen, or addressing him as God, whom the blessed martyr declares he saw with his bodily eyes, and calls him the Son of Man, standing on the right hand of God.*" This reasoning is quite invincible. Jesus must, it is evident, be a mere man, or he could not have been seen by Stephen, in a bodily form, standing on the right hand of God. He might then, of course be worshipped, and prayed to, whilst he was then visible as a man but when he ceased to appear as a man, he ought no longer to be addressed in prayer. All the arguments which Popery has ever devised, in defence of image worship, fade and vanish, in comparison of the bright and over-powering evidence, which this reasoning supplies."

Phil. ii, 6. we read—Jesus Christ being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. This, PIERCE renders "He was not eager, or tenacious, to retain that likeness to God; –a translation, which no criticism can justify, or satisfactorily explain." Others render this passage, Jesus Christ, who being in the form of God, *did not eagerly grasp at a resemblance to God, or did not esteem it a prey to be like God.* These writers boast not only that they are never put to their shifts, but as if they were the only men who can distinguish "*sense from nonsense:*" and truly they may, if they can make any sense of such a translation. But some do not regard what language they put into the mouth of the Apostle, providing they can divest Christ of his divinity. The scope of the Apostle in this place, was to teach humility, by the example of Christ. But was this purpose likely to be answered by telling us, that a mere man did not eagerly grasp at a resemblance to God? Would the Apostle think this such a striking display of humiliation, as could not fail to make a good impression on all who took it into consideration? There is no doubt but some of the Philippians had great need to be humbled; but the wonder is, that the Apostle could think of no stronger inducement to bring down their high thoughts, than to tell them of a man who did not eagerly grasp at a resemblance to God, or did not think it a prey to be like God. We read that the King of Babylon was so intoxicated with ambition, as to say he would be like the Most High; but there is no reason to believe that any in the the church at Philippi, were so strangely infatuated. How then could it enter the Apostle's mind, to tell them, with an intent to make them humble, of a man who did not eagerly grasp at a resemblance to God. He does not say that

uch a project never entered into the mind of Christ; all he an take upon him to affirm, as an inducement to humility, is, that he did not grasp at it eagerly. The old enemies of St. Paul, declared that his speech was contemptible; but this might have wanted confirmation, had it not been for the present translators. But to rescue the Apostle's reputation from such as would tear it in pieces, it may be observed, that his words, taken in their most plain and obvious meaning, suggest one of the most powerful motives to humility, which can any where be found. He gives us to understand, that Christ laid aside that visible glory which he had with the Father before the world was; took upon him the form of a servant, and submitted to die the death of the meanest slave. Should not this, therefore, tend to reconcile his people to the meanest station, and the humblest condition of human life?

By his being in the form of God, Socinians say, is to be understood, The power of working miracles; and ERASMUS makes it to consist in those sparks of divinity, by which Christ, during his incarnation, manifested his Godhead: but both these opinions are unfounded: for whatever that form of God was, it was something that he parted with: it indicated a state of exhaltation which he relinquished, for a more humble condition. The words rendered—He made himself of no reputation, signify, that he *divested* himself of his former splendour. But he never laid aside the power of working miracles, nor any sparks of Divinity, which he had ever displayed in the present world. We are therefore, to understand, by the form of God, that visible glory he displayed before he came down from heaven, to take upon him the form of a servant. Ye know, says the Apostle, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; who, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be made rich. This was not a change of nature, but of his outward appearance and condition; as may be illustrated by an opposite alteration which he underwent at the Mount of Transfiguration, when the fashion of his countenance was changed, and the Apostles were made eye-witnesses of his majesty and glory: yet at the same time, he was the same person as before. In like manner, when he was found in fashion as a man, he had not divested himself of his divine nature, but only of that glorious form which he had previously possessed.

Mr. CLARKE, on this passage, being determined to get rid of Christ's divine nature, says, "*To suppose the Apostle to say that Christ was in the form of God, and was God himself, is to suppose him to use inconsistent tautology, and to contradict himself. For what is merely the form of a thing, cannot be the thing itself.*" To see how contrary to reason this is affirmed, we have only to notice what the Apostle says in the same passage:—that, Christ took upon him the *form* of a servant, was made in the likeness of

men, and was found in fashion as a man. Now, if these expressions are consistent with his being a man at the same time, which I suppose no person will deny, then his being said to be in the form of God, is not inconsistent with the opinion, that he was God in reality: for though the form of a thing is not the thing itself yet we know that they often go together.

Another mode of Unitarian exposition is, to declare, without warrant, words and phrases, to be wanting; and then supply them by no other authority but their own. This, GROTIUS, and Dr. CLARKE do, by Rom. ix. 5. and then translate the passage —Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God *be* blessed for ever In the Unitarian version, the first verse of John, is thus rendered.—*The Word was in the beginning and the Word was with God, and the Word was a God!* By this means, we have two Gods—a great one, and a little one: unless the great God be entirely banished from the Scriptures, which might be easily done by the same mode of interpretation; and then we should have such passages as the following.—A God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son.—There was a man sent from a God, whose name was John.—In the beginning a God created the heavens, and the earth, and a Spirit of a God moved upon the face of the waters.

In Notes on the first chapter of John, Dr. PRIESTLEY informs us, that the term Logos, rendered Word, "*is nothing more than the power of God, and therefore* he says *it was no inferior principle but God himself.*" Now, if this be the case, we must translate Logos, either power, or God; and if we choose the former, we shall then read,—In the beginning was power; and this power was with God, and this power was God; and the power was made flesh, and dwelt among us, &c. If we choose the latter, we shall then read,—In the beginning was God, and God was with God, and God was God; and God was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and when we see how intelligible Socinians can make the Scriptures, we cannot but wonder at the blindness of all former Commentators.

Mr. LINDSEY, by way of improving the common version translates as follows: "In the beginning was wisdom, and wisdom was with God, and God was wisdom. The same was in the beginning with God. It was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not. It came to its own land and its own people received it not. And wisdom became man, and dwelt among us; and we beheld its glory, the glory as of the well-beloved of the Father, full of grace and truth." Allowing this to pass for a translation: If St. John wished to be understood, what could induce him to write in this manner of a mere man? For on this supposition, he tells us where he was, and what he was, before he had existence; he tells us, that God was wisdom; and in the same

reath, he is made to declare, that man was wisdom; that a man vas in the beginning with God: that this man made the world, nd was made flesh, and dwelt among us. If this be considered s a description of a mere man, it is without form, and void, and larkness is upon the face of it; but if we view it as a description f one, who was both God and man, then the darkness becomes ight about us. St. John says, In the beginning was the Word; nd by the word beginning, Socinians tell us, is meant the beginning of Christ's ministry; but for what purpose the Apostle could ive us such information, or what use is to be made of it, will remain a mystery to the end of the world: for every minister must, f necessity, be, in the beginning of his own ministry. How Christ as with God, any more in the beginning of his ministry, than in he middle and end of it, remains still to be proved. St. John ays, The world was made by Christ, and without him was not ny thing made that was made. By this, say Socinians, is to be nderstood, that he enlightened the world by his ministry; but s there is so much difference between preaching the gospel, and aking a world, we cannot but wonder that the Apostle should ubstitute the one for the other, if he had any design to enlighten is readers. Socinians allow that Christ enlightened the world, but et they suppose that he left his people so much in the dark, that ney did not know the meaning of the Scriptures for the space of fteen hundred years afterwards. There was a vail upon them, seems, till Socinus put it away. Socinus acknowledges that is opinions were new, having never entered into the mind of any rmer expositor. When some other great luminary arises, we ay perhaps be told, that the creation of the world is not menoned in the bible: for when it is said, In the beginning God eated the heavens and the earth, the meaning is, that the world as enlightened in the beginning of the mosaical dispensation. his, indeed cannot be called a new rule of interpretation, but nly the application of that which the Socinians have before emloyed on the first of John.

We are told, and with sufficient plainness, as might have been pposed, that Christ maketh intercession for us, Rom. viii. 34:— eb. vii. 25. But Mr. BELSHAM acknowledges the import of the rase is "*difficult to be ascertained; for probably,*" he says, "*the riters themselves annexed to it no very distinct idea.*" He sees very early that the phrase does not import Intercession; but does not e so clearly what it does import; but concludes it must signify, at Christ is "*employing his renovated and improved powers in some known way for the benefit of the Church.*" Here they acknowdge an Article of Faith, which they cannot understand. It is roperly stated to be in some unknown way; for we can form no ea of a finite mind, however renovated or improved in its pows, being able to attend to all the concerns of the universal Church,

so as to see every thought and desire of the heart, and tak measures accordingly. When the attention of one human mind devided among the whole, it would seem that very little could fa to the share of an individual; but however little this may happe to be, we may venture to affirm, that it will not be less than th benefit which Socinians are expecting to receive from this sourc

In Acts xx. 28. mention is made of the Church of Go which he purchased with his own blood. But instead of his ow blood, Mr. WAKEFIELD proposes to render it, *"his own son;* for which he assigns the following reason: *"because a man's so may be said to be his own blood; and therefore the Son of Go may be expressed by God's own blood."* Such are the write who are never put to their shifts. No doubt they are the me and wisdom will die with them.

My prescribed limits compel me at present to desist; but trust that every unprejudiced reader will see that the Scripture can never be reconciled with Socinianism: that if we embrace th one, we must reject the other; and likewise that Socinianism wi prove a poor substitute for the glorious Gospel of the blesse God. The Doctrines of the Cross, are to many a stone stumbling, and a rock of offence: but other foundation can n man lay, than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus; an he that believeth, shall not be confounded. The Socinian syste is exhibited by its advocates, as rich, and increased in good and in need of nothing; but when examined, it is found to b wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

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THE LATE DECLARATION

OF THE

CATHOLIC BISHOPS, THE VICARS APOSTOLIC,

And their Coadjutors in Great Britain,

PROVED TO BE FALSE AND INCREDIBLE:

IN REPLY TO

THE REV. E. DANIEL.

BY ABRAHAM SCOTT.

PRICE FOUR-PENCE.

THE light in which one minister may view another, and the personal reflections that may be made in disputation, are comparatively uninteresting to the public; and, as far as my own character only is involved, I could willingly submit, without returning any reply, to all the gross and unfounded calumnies which my opponent has thrown out. And this submission could scarcely be accounted an act of magnanimity, because his publication betrays in its author, such puerility, such want of argument, such a disregard of the truth, and is such a burlesque on discussion, that it can only disgrace himself and his own party.

But the question at issue is, whether the Protestant or the Papist religion is that which was propagated by Christ and his apostles. These two systems differ so widely, and so essentially, that they cannot both be true; and it is of the utmost importance, with respect, both to our present peace, and our everlasting welfare, to ascertain which of them has the best claim to genuine Christianity; and this point is to be determined by the word of God. Those who admit of any other rule of faith and practice, flee to a refuge of lies, and imitate the foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

It may be needful to inform some readers, that Mr. Daniel, by public lectures in his chapel, and the distribution of tracts, has laboured with great zeal and perseverance to prove, that genuine Christianity can only be found in his own community: and had we remained silent, to which we might feel a natural propensity, some might have been carried away by his sophistry and dissimulation. We were therefore urged by a principle of self defence, and a desire to prevent the ruin of our neighbours, to point out the superstition and intolerance, the errors and corruptions of the Popish system. In what we have advanced, nothing has been attributed to their religion, but what can be proved from their own writings; but it is easy for any opponent to deny facts which he cannot disprove; to evade arguments which he cannot confute; to substitute invective for discussion; and turn subjects of public interest into personal animosity:

that this has been the case with Mr. D., is evident to all impartial persons who have perused his second letter to tract readers.

To shew his manner of handling a subject, we shall select a few specimens, and may commence with the least offensive. He says, "Mr. S. attempts to defend the tract, (on Heathen ceremonies adopted by the Church of Rome); and yet, in a few lines afterwards, with a consistency peculiar to himself, says, he is not able to procure it!!!" These three notes of admiration, denote that there is something strange and wonderful in what is stated. But we ask, may not a person defend without any inconsistency, what he distinctly remembers to have read, though he may not have the work in his possession? What I principally defended in that tract, was the passage which he had selected as the most objectionable; and the passage thus brought into view, might be consistently defended, without having the work from which the passage was taken. The inconvenience, if there was any, remained with myself; but what was written under such circumstances, he has not been able to refute.

In reference to the tract in question, he says, "I do not consider the use of ceremonies in religion, as a corruption of Christianity." But this is nothing to the purpose, for nothing had been advanced against the use of all ceremonies in religion; as the reader might be led to suppose, by his false statement of the case; the charge was against the introduction and practice of Heathen ceremonies, as may be seen by the following quotation.

"The Chinese burn incense in their temples at this day, and the Church of Rome does the same; though the first Christains deemed the act of burning incense so peculiarly heathenish, that they refused to do so at the peril of their lives. The use of holy water is known to every one who enters a chapel; but many do not know that the heathen temples were each provided with vessels of holy water, with which the worshippers sprinkled themselves; the resemblance is so strong that Roman Catholic writers are obliged to confess that they borrowed the custom from heathens. The heathen holy water, like the Popish, was nothing more than salt and water, and the brush with which, on solemn occasions, the pagan priest sprinkled the multitude, was much the same in form, as that used in the Church of Rome. The early Christians manifested as great an abhorrence of holy water as they did of incense; and the heathen Emperor, Julian, from hatred to them, ordered all the provisions sold in the market, to be sprinkled with this water, which he considered would be so great a pollution in the eyes of Christians, that none of them would purchase such food. The fathers of the Church spoke of this practice as one purely heathenish, and therefore condemned it as hateful and impious. Justin Martyr, in his famous apology for the Christians, says, it was an invention of the devil in imitation of true baptism; yet the Church of Rome has adopted this heathenish and superstitious practice; and so far from thinking as Justin did, her people are taught that holy water will guard them from the power of the devil."

In reply, Mr. D. says, "I deny that the ceremonies as made use of in the Catholic Church, were condemned by the primitive Christians; that they are customs borrowed from Pagans." We ask, does a denial disprove the charges? If so, there is no truth which may not be banished out of the world. If he had proved, either, that Justin Martyr

had not condemned these ceremonies, or that he had not spoken the genuine sentiments of the Church at that time, we should have seen something in the shape of an argument; but he found a mere denial better adapted to his convenience. "A slight inspection," he says, "into our controversial works, will convince the impartial reader, that they are practices sanctioned by the Church of God from the earliest ages." Why then does he not produce out of these works, what he was so much in need of, and what so slight an inspection would have furnished?

He proceeds as follows: "Mr. S. may believe, if he pleases, that the Pope can drive Princes from their thrones; that the people must put their sentence in execution; that the Pope can command in opposition to the epistles of St. Paul; that he is able to nullify the apostles' writings, &c. &c.; but Catholics are taught no such wonders." In reply, it may be observed, that what I "may believe," is not the question; but whether what he here denies, are their own declarations. That it might be distinctly known, that the above quotations and others of a similar description, were the avowed sentiments of Roman Catholics, in their own words, the work was mentioned, where a reference to them all might be found. But that work, says Mr. D., is "replete with false assertions:" for this we are left to take his bare word, if we can, as he has not been able to point out one of these "false assertions." But even supposing that work to contain false assertions, it is nothing to the point in hand, provided the quotations are genuine and correctly stated; and whether they are so or not may be easily ascertained, as reference is made to the books and pages from whence they are taken: and if he could have shewn that any of the quotations were false, can any one believe that he would have neglected to do it? But Mr. D. says, "Why does he not refer us to some authorized work of the Jesuits themselves?" We answer, that this is the very thing which the author in question has done, and by his honesty and truth, which cannot be refuted, he has given such offence to the Papists, that they load his memory with unfounded calumny. But he says the quotations are from "a work they do not acknowledge." We ask how it could be expected that they would acknowledge another man's work; especially when it is written with a design to expose their wickedness and absurdities? But the works from whence the quotations are taken, have obtained both their acknowledgment and approbation. When Mr. D. with such unparalleled insolence denies their own writings, without producing the shadow of a proof that they have not written them, we leave the reader to judge in what light the public must regard him, if they treat him with all the contempt he deserves. He declares the quotations "are complete libels on the Jesuits." If so, they have completely libelled themselves, for their own words only have been given. What could induce any man to libel such a generation of vipers? Their principles and practices cannot be made to appear more detestable than they are in reality.

Their founder, Ignatius Loyola, in the year 1540 collected together all the different monastic rules of preceding orders, and added some of his own, particularly this: *That the general, provincials, and superiors of his order, may dispense with all laws, human and divine, dissolve all oaths and vows, and free men from the obligation of all rules and decrees.* These Jesuits are much the most dangerous of all

who pretend to the name of Religious, inasmuch as they declare no villainy, no treachery, no cruelty, to be criminal, provided it tends to the benefit of their society. Whenever a nation is so unfortunate as to be overrun with this diabolical crew, no member of the community can promise himself security. Jean Chastel, according to his own confession was bred up among the Jesuits: and being persuaded by them, that the murder of Henry IV. of France would atone for all his past sins, and merit heaven, he attempted it, by stabbing that monarch in the mouth. But it was reserved for Ravaillac to give that king his mortal stab. That the Jesuits employed this murderer, we have the testimony of that great and learned man, Father Paul, who lived at that time: and as he was counsellor of stateto the republic of Venice, he was well acquainted with all the intrigues of the courts of Europe. It were tedious to enumerate all the murders, treasons, rebellions, blasphemies, and such like crimes, for which this society has been banished out of France, from Dantzic, from the Venetian territories, out of Thorn, from Cracovia, and Bohemia: not to mention that contrivance of theirs in England, to blow up the king and parliament at once, with gunpowder. (See *Imperial Magazine*, Vol II. p. 308.) This is a specimen of the society which we are said to libel, because we quote their own words. Whether our opponent be a Jesuit, we know not; but by vindicating their cause, he partakes of their sins, and identifies himself with all their atrocities.

He tells us that he has written his few pages for the *"uninformed,"* and it appears that he intends to keep them so: his drift is, not to enlighten, but to keep them in darkness: whatever is advanced against Popery, though supported with the clearest evidence, he declares has no "claim to credibility;" at the same time, no statement has been made which he can disprove, nor any argument used which he can refute. When he gives a quotation, it is so mutilated and distorted as to pervert the sense. He says, I have called him Jesuitical, because he has no "aversion to some kinds of tracts." Of this, as he has stated it, the reader can make no sense whatever; nor can any such thing be found in what I have written. There is a manifest difference between a person having no objection to some kinds of tracts, and his *pretending* to have none, when that pretence is set up for the purpose of deception; and it was in this sense that the term Jesuitical was used.

"Why," he says, "do not the Catholics, those *sons of Belial*, those who are *like so many furies of hell*, (Mr. S's own words)." That these are my words will be admitted; but has he so placed them as to give the sense in which they were used? Would not any person, by reading the words as they now stand, be led to suppose that I had applied these epithets to the Catholics exclusively, and to all the Catholics of the present day? But nothing can be more false. The former phrase is applied to all who oppose a work of piety, whether they be Protestants, Papists, or Heathens: the latter is applied only to bloody Mary, Gardiner, and Bonner, when they were committing multitudes of innocent people to the flames, for their religious opinions. Let the words be connected with that circumstance only, and then say whether they are improper.

When he is falsifying my words, and vilifying my character, shewing an utter disregard for truth, and transgressing all the bounds of decency,

he is at the same time declaiming about that "Christian charity, so necessary in a preacher of the gospel." But he should remember, charity doth not behave itself unseemly: rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

Mr. D. seems wishful to find a great fund of ridicule in the small price at which my tract was sold; but after he has adverted to the circumstance in so many places, we have yet to learn that it is reproachful to sell a penny-worth for a penny. Such a small sum was not despised by the Church of Rome, when the Pope claimed Peter's-pence; that is, one penny a year from every family in England. We are well aware that selling tracts is not so gainful as some kinds of Romish traffic. During the wars of Elizabeth, Mr. White, of London, "took two Spanish ships, which contained about two millions of bulls for indulgences, a commodity useless to the English, but which had cost the king of Spain three hundred thousand florins, and would have been sold by him, in the Indies, for five millions;" an evident proof, that both the Pope and this Popish king knew how to turn the penny.

Mr. D. brings into view "Protestant laws," which he says "commanded the peaceful ministers of the Catholic Church to be dragged from the altar of God, and hurried to the place of execution." Why he introduced such a subject is best known to himself; but a Papist should be the last man to talk of persecution. Penal statutes have indeed been made against Papists; but whether any were ever made against the peaceable ministers of that Church remains to be proved. The truth is, no law was ever made in England, affecting the life or limb of a Papist, that was not made for the security of the throne. The principal part of these laws were made in the reign of Elizabeth; and that they were made on the sole principle of self defence, is sufficiently evident. Hume, who cared no more for the Protestant than he did for the Popish religion, may be considered as an impartial historian on this subject; and he says,—"The queen and parliament were engaged to pass these severe laws against the Catholics, by some late discoveries of the treasonable practices of their priests. When the Reformation was introduced into our universities, the king of Spain reflected that some species of literature was needful, for supporting their doctrines and controversies; and for this reason he founded a seminary at Douay, where the Catholics sent their children, chiefly such as were intended for the priesthood. The Cardinal of Lorraine imitated this example, by erecting a like seminary at Rheims. These seminaries, founded with an hostile intention, sent over every year a colony of priests, who infused into all their votaries an extreme hatred against the queen, whom they treated as an usurper, a heretic, and one solemnly and publicly anathematized by the holy Father. Sedition, rebellion, and sometimes assassination, were the expedients by which they intended to effect their purpose against her. These seminaries were under the direction of the Jesuits, who, by their erudition, were more enabled to refine away the plainest dictates of morality, and to erect a regular system of casuistry, by which prevarication, perjury, and every crime, when it served their ghostly purposes, might be justified and defended."

"The Jesuits, as devoted servants to the court of Rome, exalted the prerogative of the sovereign Pontiff, above all earthly power; and, by

maintaining his authority of deposing kings, set no bounds either to hi temporal or spiritual jurisdiction. This doctrine became so prevalen among the zealous Catholics in England, that the excommunication ful minated against Elizabeth, excited many scruples of a singular kind, t which it behoved the holy fathers to provide a remedy. The bull o Pius, in absolving the subjects from the oath of allegiance, commande them to resist the queen's usurpation; and many Romanists were ap prehensive, that by this clause they were obliged in conscience, ever though no favourable opportunity offered, to rebel against her, and tha no dangers or difficulties could free them from this indispensable duty But Parsons and Campion, two Jesuits, were sent over with a mitiga tion and explanation of the doctrine; and they taught their disciples that though the bull was for ever binding on Elizabeth and her partisans it did not oblige the Catholics to obedience, except when the sovereig Pontiff should think proper, by a new summons, to require it. Campio was afterwards detected in treasonable practices, and publicly executed.

"The anxiety of the queen from the attempts of the English Catho lics never ceased during the whole course of her reign; but the variety o revolutions which happened in all the neighbouring kingdoms, was the source, sometimes of her hopes, and sometimes of her apprehensions. The revolutions in Scotland, would have been regarded as of small im portance to the repose and security of Elizabeth, had her own subjects been entirely united, and had not the zeal of the Catholics daily threat ened her with some dangerous insurrection.

"William Parry, a Roman Catholic gentleman, had received the queen's pardon, for a crime by which he was exposed to capital punish ment; and having obtained permission to travel, he retired to Milan. He was here persuaded by Palmis, a Jesuit, that he could not perform a more meritorious action, than to take away the life of his sovereign and benefactress; the nuncio Compaggio, when consulted, approved ex tremely of this pious undertaking; and Parry, though still agitated with doubts, came to Paris, with an intention of passing over to England, and executing his bloody purpose.

"He was encouraged in the design by Thomas Morgan, a gentleman of great credit in that party; and though Watts, and some other Catho lic priests, told him the enterprise was criminal and impious, he preferred the authority of Raggazoni, the nuncio of Paris, and determined to per sist in his resolution. He wrote here a letter to the Pope, which was conveyed to Cardinal Como; he communicated his intention to the holy father, and craved his absolution and paternal benediction. He re ceived an answer by the Cardinal, by which he found that his purpose was extremely applauded; and he came over to England with a full de sign of carrying it into execution.

"He resolved, before he came to extremities, to try every other expedi ent, in order to procure relief for the Catholics. He found means of being introduced to the queen; assured her that many conspiracies were formed against her; and exhorted her, as she tendered her life, to give the Ro manists more indulgence; but lest he should be tempted by the opportu nity to assassinate her, he always came to court unprovided with every offensive weapon. He even found means to be elected member of Parlia ment; and having made a vehement harangue against the severe laws

enacted during the last session, he was committed to custody, and sequestered from the house.

"His failure confirmed him the more in his former resolution; and he communicated his intentions to Nevil, who entered zealously into the design, and was determined to have a share in the merit of the execution. A book, newly published by Dr. Allen, afterwards created a Cardinal, served further to efface all their scruples with regard to the murder of an heretical prince: and having agreed to shoot the queen while she should be taking the air on horse back, they resolved, if they could not make their escape, to sacrifice their lives, in fulfilling a duty so agreeable, as they imagined, to the will of God, and to true religion. But while they were watching an opportunity for the execution of their purpose, the Earl of Westmoreland happened to die in exile; and as Nevil was next heir to that family, he began to entertain hopes, that by doing some acceptable service to the queen, he might recover the estate and honours which had been forfeited by the rebellion of the last Earl.

"He betrayed the whole conspiracy to the ministers; and Parry being thrown into prison, confessed their guilt, both to them, and to the jury who tried him. The letter from Cardinal Como being produced in court, put the narrative beyond all question, and he suffered the punishment which the law appointed for this treasonable conspiracy."

On this subject abundance more might be given; but the above extracts from Hume, are sufficient to shew the danger which the government and the nation were in from the principles and practices of the Papists; and the laws made against them, had no other design, than to frustrate their conspiracies and intended assassinations. Mr. D. writing for the "uninformed," may labour to persuade them that these laws were made against the "peaceful ministers of the Catholic Church;" but let him produce a single instance, when any minister of this description was ever executed in the British dominions.

It is true, the Catholics have published a book of martyrs; but it is one of the most infamous publications which ever disgraced a civilized country. Their pretended martyrs are such as belong to the Newgate calendar. They have, for instance, among their martyrs, some who suffered during the late Irish rebellion; and it is well known, on that occasion, none suffered for being Papists, but for being rebels against the state. The Papists, as we have been informed by credible persons who were eye-witnesses, frequently slaughtered the Protestants with every mark of wanton cruelty. They butchered great numbers of them in cool blood,* and often in a manner too shocking to relate. During the night-season, they set their houses on fire,† with the diabolical purpose of burning alive, men, women, and children; and when any attempted to make their escape, they pushed them back with their pikes into the flames. But in all the coercive measures adopted by Government for quelling that rebellion, no difference was made between Papist and Protestant. Several Popish Priests were among the rebels, and some of

* At Wexford, 98 out of 100 Protestants, the first division selected for slaughter, were savagely butchered; and the remaining two were saved by the advance of the king's army.

† In a barn at Scullaboge, near 300 Protestants were shut up, and burned together with the barn.

them paid the forfeit with their lives: and Mr. D. if he pleases, may call these "the peaceful ministers of the Catholic church;" and say they were "dragged from the altar of God, and hurried to a place of execution;" and like the author of their own book of martyrs, he may describe their sufferings, and never mention the crimes for which they suffered; for he seems to think that he may avail himself of any imposition while he is writing for the "uninformed."

Supposing some Papists who were not engaged in actual conspiracy were executed for acts which the state for its own security had been obliged to make high treason, only some solitary instances of this kind could be produced from the accession of Elizabeth in 1558, to the year 1785, when the last penal statute against the Papists was passed, including a period of 227 years. But how many Protestants were executed and in a far more horrible manner, during the last three years of Mary's reign? Besides those who were punished by imprisonment, fines and confiscations; among those who were burnt at a stake, were five Bishops, twenty-one clergymen, eight lay gentlemen, eighty-four tradesmen, one hundred husbandmen, servants and labourers, fifty-five women, and four children. Let these three years' persecution be compared with what the Papists have suffered for between two and three hundred years, and see what will be the result: yet the persecution under Mary was very little to what has taken place in other countries.

"The Emperor Charles, who proposed to augment his authority, under the pretence of defending the Catholic faith, easily adopted these political principles; and notwithstanding the limited prerogative which he possessed in the Netherlands, he published the most arbitrary, severe and tyrannical edicts against the Protestants; and he took care that the execution of them should be no less violent and sanguinary. He was neither cruel nor bigoted in his natural disposition; yet an historian, celebrated for moderation and candour, has computed that in the several persecutions promoted by that monarch, no less than a hundred thousand persons perished by the hands of the executioner. Father Paul says, when speaking of the persecutions which the Protestants suffered, that in the Netherlands alone, under Charles, there had been fifty-thousand persons hanged, beheaded, buried alive, or burnt, on account of religion."

It is not only the number that suffered under Mary, that is to be considered, but likewise the horrid cruelty of their Popish persecutors. When Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, was brought to the stake, the wind blew the flame from his body; the faggots were green, and did not kindle easily: all his lower parts were consumed before his vitals were attacked: one of his hands dropt off; with the other he continued to beat his breast; he was heard to pray, and exhort the people, till his tongue, swollen with the violence of his agony, could no longer permit him utterance. He was three quarters of an hour in torture, which he bore with inflexible constancy. The Popish Bishop, Bonner, seemed to rejoice in the torments of the unhappy sufferers. He sometimes whipped the prisoners with his own hands, till he was tired with the violence of the exercise. He tore out the beard of a weaver, who refused to relinquish his religion; and that he might give him a specimen of burning he held his hand to the candle till the sinews and veins shrunk and burst. "One Hunter, a young man of nineteen, an apprentice, having been

seduced by a Priest into a dispute, had unwarily denied the real presence: sensible of his danger, he immediately absconded; but Bonner laying hold of his Father, threatened him with the greatest severities, if he did not produce the young man. Hunter hearing of the vexations to which his Father was exposed, voluntarily surrendered himself to Bonner, and was condemned to the flames by that barbarous prelate." A woman in Guernsey, being near the time of her labour when brought to the stake, was thrown into such violent agitation by the torture, that she was delivered in the midst of the flames. One of the guards immediately snatched the infant from the fire, but a magistrate who stood by, ordered it to be thrown back, being determined, he said, that nothing should survive which sprang from so obstinate and heretical a parent.

The persons condemned to these punishments, were not convicted of teaching contrary to the established religion: they were seized on suspicion, and articles being offered them to subscribe, they were immediately upon their refusal, condemned to the flames. The pretended crime for which almost all the Protestants were condemned, was their refusal to acknowledge transubstantiation. The court issued a proclamation against books of heresy, and declared "that whoever had any of these books, and did not burn them without reading them, or showing them to any other person, should be esteemed rebels; and without further delay, be executed by martial law."

"The burning of heretics," says Hume, "was a very natural method of reconciling the kingdom to the Romish communion;" yet there were some hindrances in the way. The Pope was offended, that Mary still retained among her titles the Queen of Ireland; and he affirmed that it belonged to him alone, as he saw cause, either to erect new kingdoms, or to abolish the old. He insisted that all the property which belonged to the Church before Henry VIII. should be restored, to the uttermost farthing. He declared that every person who detained such possessions was in a state of eternal damnation. Among the rest, he insisted that Peter's pence should be restored; and said they could not expect that the apostle would open to them the gates of Paradise, while they detained from him his patrimony on earth.

After all, we hear that a Popish priest has the effrontery to speak of their persecutions; and with the same impudence he affirms, that "Protestants in Catholic countries, enjoy those liberties, rights, and privileges, to which Catholics in this country are utter strangers." And those happy countries, which so effectually and extensively establish the liberties and privileges of Protestants, are "France, Spain, and Italy." As a confirmation of this, with respect to Italy, he says,—"In Rome the Protestants practise their religion without molestation." In reply, we may express our fears, that many who resort to this sink of pollution have not much religion to practise; and on that account may live there with less molestation. Besides, at Rome there is such a large concourse of strangers, that it considerably augments the Pope's revenues; and for the purpose of promoting his own interest, he relaxes his severities against other denominations. But even at Rome, when the sovereign Pontiff passes by, if a Protestant does not fall on his knees in the dirty street, his life is in danger of being sacrificed to superstitious bigotry, and Popish intolerance; and this is the case when the host is carried along, both at Rome and

in other Popish countries. And cannot Papists in this country practis their religion without molestation? Could any man in Rome publish without molestation, such tracts against Popery, as Mr. D. does in thi country against the Protestant religion? "In France," he says, "it i established by law, that where there are five hundred Protestants, a plac of worship shall be built, a Minister salaried, who shall have £20 a yea more than a parish Priest." We answer, that many things have been ad mitted, within the last thirty years, into the French consitution, over whic the Papists had no control, and that is the case with every thing that tends t religious liberty. Louis XVIII. for political reasons, might give his as sent to what did not meet his approbation. But since Protestant raised him to the throne, what favour has ever been shewn, either b him or his successor, to the Protestants? Has the law in question eve been acted upon in any one instance? Some months ago, a report ap peared in the papers, stating, that a considerable number, 500 at least, o the Catholics at Lyons, had left their former place of worship, and had em braced the Protestant religion: at that time I happened to be in company with a French gentleman, from Lyons, who assured me the report coul not be true; for he said, if any such circumstance had taken place, they would have been immediately surrounded by armed men, and taken t prison. The gentleman who gave me this information was a Papist, an one who had taken an active part in establishing Louis on the throne The treatment, he said, they would have met with, was very different t that of building them a place of worship, and giving their minister a salary.*

Soon after Louis ascended the throne, the Protestants at Nismes, i France, were furiously persecuted; great numbers of them lost thei lives, and their places of worship were demolished; and these Popis tumults continued for weeks and months together; and though the En glish army was then in the country, the government appeared very re miss in using any means to prevent these disorders. At this time, the law now boasted of was in existence; but no law can secure Protes tants, whilst the administration of the laws is in the hands of Papists.

With respect to the liberty which he says Protestants have in Spain Mr. D. does not attempt to give any proof. Ferdinand is so divested o Popish bigotry, and so friendly to all kinds of liberty, that there neede no other proof of Protestant privileges in that nation. He did not ever mention the holy Inquisition; though that would have furnished hin with as strong a proof as any he brought forward, to confirm his asser tion, that "Protestants in Catholic countries, enjoy those liberties, rights and privileges, to which Catholics in this country are utter strangers."

* Since writing the above, the following information has come to hand: Mr Mollard Lefevre, a merchant of Lyons, has communicated, through the mediun of the *Courier Francois*, his reasons, drawn from Scripture, for leaving the Roma Catholic Church. This letter has been the means of awakening the attention of th people to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and we trust that thousands will b benefited by its perusal. Three parishes in the neighbourhood of Lyons have pe tioned for Protestant ministers. Mr. Morton assembled the deputies of these parishe in his house, for the purpose of considering the circumstances of their case, an promoting their pious desires; but the mayor of the city immediately seized an imprisoned them; and all the numbers of the newspaper in which the letter wa published, were seized by order of the government. Such are the rights and libertie which the Protestants enjoy in France, and to which the Catholics in this countr are utter strangers.

In opposition to the charges against Popery in my former pamphlets, Mr. D. brings forward the late declaration of the Catholic Bishops. Against the charge of idlatory, the bishops declare as follows:—"The Catholic Church teacheth that idolatry is one of the greatest crimes that can be committed against the majesty of God; and every member of this Church shudders at the idea of such a crime, and feels grievously insulted by the imputation of such a crime." We suppose, by the Catholic Church, they mean what they should have said, namely—the Church of Rome: and what renders this declaration incredible, is the fact, that all these Bishops are living in the constant practice of the grossest idolatry which ever insulted heaven, or disgraced the world. They worship a wafer god; against which they have no way of vindicating themselves, than by falsely and impiously pretending that they can change a piece of bread into the body and divinity of the Saviour; which supposes, that Christ, at the last supper, held the whole of himself in his hand, and afterwards swallowed the whole of his human and divine nature. Roman Catholics have acknowledged, that if transubstantiation is not true, they are the greatest idolaters in the world: and this is a doctrine which was not believed by the primitive Christians, nor by some of the first Popes of Rome; and a doctrine which can never be proved by either reason or scripture: and as they cannot prove this doctrine, they can never refute the charge of idolatry. Their plea, that it is Christ they worship, whether the bread be changed into his substance or not, if admitted, would clear the Israelites from the charge of idolatry when they worshipped the golden calf.

All their quibbles concerning the different acceptations of the word worship, in the bible, avail nothing; for the worship they pay to the Virgin Mary, is such as belongs to God alone. In their books of devotion, she is invoked and adored in such language as the following:—"*The heavens declare thy glory, O Lady.—Gate of heaven—refuge of sinners—the ark of the covenant! O blessed Virgin, who expiatest our sins, with the authority of a mother, command the Redeemer. O Mary! mother of grace, sweet parent of mercy, do thou protect us from the enemy, and receive us in the hour of death!*" These devotions are an acknowledgment of powers in Mary, which no creature can possess, and therefore they constitute an honour which is due to God alone; and when such honour is given in worshipping a creature, it constitutes the essence of idolatry.

Another charge against the Church of Rome is, that the most solemn oaths and the most sacred treaties are never looked upon by this Church and its Pontiffs as obligatory, when the violation of them may contribute to their interests or accomplish their views. To refute this the following declaration of the Bishops is produced: "Catholics hold that the obligation of an oath is most sacred; and that whosoever swears falsely, or violates the engagement he has confirmed by an oath, is guilty of the enormous sin of perjury." On this subject we ask, whether the declaration of suspected persons is ever considered as decisive evidence in their own cause? If it is, the perpetrators of the greatest crimes may pass without conviction. This part of the bishops' declaration is not very explicit, as it only amounts to this, that he who swears falsely is guilty of the enormous sin of swearing falsely, which is no definition of the

crime. But if they mean to say that it is a crime which they will on no account commit, we want some proof of it; for in cases where we suspect their oaths, we cannot be expected to take their bare word. If they could produce evidence that no opportunity of success or aggrandizement had ever been laid hold of by their Church, when an oath stood in the way, it would be something to the purpose. As the charge is supported by facts, it can only be refuted by facts, and not by any simple declaration. Had not Charles, king of France, solemnly sworn to grant toleration to his Protestant subjects? and did not the Pope and his council encourage him to break his oath? Did they not highly applaud the horrid massacre of the Protestants, which followed the violation of his oath? When the Papal See was pouring out its fury on the unfortunate Albigenses, the Earl of Beziers was defending the fortress of Carcasson; and when the Papists could make no impression on that fortress, the Pope's legate sent a gentleman who was well skilled in the arts of dissimulation, with full powers to make the best use of them. "Swear (he said) to what falsehoods you will: in such a cause, I will give you absolution." The Earl, relying on the oaths and promises made to him, went out to the legate, and was immediately made prisoner, and confined in the tower of Carcasson till he died. Volumes might be filled with facts which support this charge against the Romish Church. And can any one imagine that the public can be imposed upon by their declaring that they respect an oath?

Another charge which our opponent notices is, that no faith is to be kept with heretics, as they call Protestants; and that the Pope may absolve subjects from the oaths of allegiance to their sovereign, are sentiments which the Church of Rome has both avowed and practised. To this we reply, that there is no historical record supported by stronger evidence than this charge against the Church of Rome. If the bishops deny this, they will be guilty of such notorious falsehood, as to cover themselves with eternal infamy and disgrace. But let us hear their declaration. "Catholics (they say) hold and declare, that all Catholics are bound by the law of nature, and by the law of revealed religion, to observe the duties of fidelity and justice to all men, without any exception of persons and without any distinction of nation or religion. They also declare that they do not believe that the Pope, or any ecclesiastical power, can absolve subjects from their allegiance." With respect to the former part of this declaration, the question is, how do they make it agree with the decrees of their Popes and General Councils? Let us not rest in declarations, but appeal to facts. The Lateran Council, held in 1215, declared that no faith or promise is to be kept with heretics, to the prejudice of the Catholic faith. The Council of Constance, held in 1415, confirmed this decree of the Lateran Council, and acted upon it by committing John Huss to the flames, contrary to the safe conduct delivered to him by the Emperor Sigismund: and to quiet the conscience of the Emperor, when he blushed at this breach of faith, they gave him a plenary indulgence. This was done before all Europe, and by a General Council; that very assembly of Church dignitaries and princes from all parts of Europe, which first declared general Councils to be infallible, and that in them the infallibility of the Church of Rome resided. The decrees of this infallible Council have never been disannulled nor

disavowed by the Pope and his Cardinals; and every Popish clergyman at his admission to the priesthood, takes the following oath: "To the Roman Pontiff I promise and swear true obedience. All other things also, declared by the sacred canons and general Councils, without doubt, I receive and profess, &c. &c. All this I promise, vow, and swear; so help me God." It is undeniably evident that the declaration of the bishops is a contradiction to the decrees of their General Councils, and yet the decrees of these Councils they are sworn to receive and maintain. If they receive the decrees of these Councils, their declaration is evidently false; and if they act contrary to these Councils, which they are sworn to receive and maintain, they are guilty of the enormous sin of perjury; and, therefore, their declaration is worthy of no regard. If the declaration should be taken as their own opinion, it is to be remembered that the English Catholics have never been delared to be infallible; but the General Councils, which their declaration contradicts, have been declared infallible; and whether is the fallible or infallible part of the Church most likely to prevail when any point comes to be disputed. It is moreover to be recollected that these bishops have sworn obedience to the Pope, and the Pope has never made any similar declaration; and, hence, if we could even suppose that there was any sincerity in their declaration, it would afford no ground of dependence, without a ratification from the Pope, which has never yet been obtained.

"They do not believe," say these Bishops, "that the Pope or any ecclesiastical power can absolve subjects from their allegiance." What they believe on this article, is best known to themselves: what we have stated is, that the opposite sentiment has been both avowed and acted upon by the Church of Rome: and this position cannot be overthrown by any thing which they may at present either believe, or say they believe. Pope Gregory VII. laid down and established the following principles: that the Pope "has power to depose Emperors and Kings: that the Church of Rome never did, and never can err: *that the Pope can absolve the subjects of any Prince from their allegiance:*" and we might mention a great number of Popes who have acted upon this principle. One of them was Gregory himself. He excommunicated Henry IV. Emperor of Germany, and absolved all his subjects from their allegiance. Pope Innocent IV. acted the same part, towards John, King of England. Pope Pius V. issued a bull of excommunication against Queen Elizabeth, and deprived her of all title to the crown, and absolved her subjects from their oath of allegiance. But the Bishops now say, they do not believe the Pope has such power. Do they then believe, that those Popes who have absolved subjects from their allegiance were guilty of "falsehood, usurpation, and treason?" Do they believe, that their infallible Church erred, in supporting their Popes in the exercise of such usurpations? And are they now willing to confess and forsake their errors? If these Catholic Bishops and Vicars Apostolic, had intended to be believed, why did they not say, We allow that our Popes have frequently absolved subjects from the oath of allegiance, and our Church has long supported them in these dangerous usurpations; but we are convinced they have done wrong, and if they persist either in such opinions or practices, we will dissent from them. But so long as these Bishops contend that their Church has never erred,

none but the greatest dupes can give any credit to their present declara-
tion. We admit that we are not afraid that the Pope will absolve any o
his present majesty's subjects from their allegiance: what a change of ci
cumstances might occasion is another question: but we believe that litt
dependance is to be placed on any oath of allegiance taken by Papists t
a Protestant Sovereign. A gentleman of Belfast says, "Prior to th
Irish Rebellion, in 1798, all classes of Papists flocked to the quarte
Sessions, and to individual magistrates, with anxious solicitude *to tak
the oath of allegiance to the king*, and to have their names enrolle
among his majesty's most loyal and faithful subjects. I myself, holdin
an official situation, administered the oath to many hundreds. A fe
months, however, developed the real source of this superabundant loy
alty; the plan of the rebellion was laid, and it was necessary to *mas
the first operations with the oath of allegiance*? But no sooner wa
the rebellion actually commenced, than every man among them, wh
could procure a pike or a musket, hastened to join the standard, an
gave a practical and decisive proof how conscientiously *they kept fait
with heretics.*

Another charge against the Roman Catholics is, that they believe Pr
testants to be heretics, whom it is their duty to extirpate by all means i
their power. Against this charge the Bishops declare, "Catholics ca
God to witness, that they abjure, condemn, and detest, as unchristia
and impious, the principle, that it is lawful to murder, destroy, o
any ways injure any person whatsoever, for, or under pretence of bein
heretics." The question here is, Do they state this as the sentiments o
their Church, or as a proof of their dissent from it? If it is to be take
in the latter sense, it does not overthrow the charge; but if in the forme
the charge and the declaration are so opposite, that they cannot both b
true: and it remains for us either to prove the truth of the charge, o
acknowledge it to be wrong. And for the credit of our common hu
manity, we earnestly wish that the charge could not be substantiated:
would give us great pleasure to find, and to acknowledge, that the charge wa
false. But the history of their Popes and Councils, and of their persecution
with which volumes might be filled, demonstrates the charge to be true, an
establishes it beyond the possibility of refutation; as the specimens alread
given sufficiently prove. The great Lateran Council declare as follows—
"We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy extolling itsel
against the holy, orthodox, Catholic faith, which we before expounded
condemning all heretics, by what names soever called; and being con
demned, let them be left to the secular power; and let the secular powe
be warned and induced, and if need be compelled by ecclesiastical cen
sure, what offices soever they are in, that as they desire to be repute
and taken for believers, so they publicly *take an oath* for the defenc
of the faith, that they will study in good earnest to exterminate to thei
utmost power, from the lands subject to their jurisdiction, all heretic
denoted by the Church. But if the temporal lord, required and warne
by the Church, shall neglect to purge his territory of this ecclesiastica
filth, let him be tried by the bond of excommunication: and if he scor
to satisfy within a year, let that be signified to the Pope, that he may de
nounce his yassals thenceforth absolved from his fidelity (or allegiance,
and may expose his country to be seized on by Catholics, who, exterm

nating the heretics, may possess it without any contradiction: and the Catholics, that, taking the badge of the cross, shall gird themselves for the exterminating of heretics, shall enjoy the indulgence, and be fortified with that holy privilege which is granted to them that go to the help of the Holy Land." The decrees of this Council justify the charge against the Church of Rome, and these decrees have been acted upon in instances too numerous to mention; and these decrees the bishops are sworn to receive and maintain. The only way in which the bishops could give any credibility to their declaration, would be by proving, that they do not hold the same creed which their Church formerly held; but to this refuge they do not seem inclined to flee, and their escape this way is cut off by their oath to receive all the canons and councils of their Church. So long as they abide by the oath they have taken, and maintain the infallibility of their Church, we do not ask merely whether it is possible for any other man to believe their declaration, but whether it is possible they can believe it themselves? Can they believe it so long as their Church keeps up the Inquisition?

Another charge against the Church of Rome is, that they keep the people in ignorance by forbidding the reading of God's word. Against this charge the bishops declare, that the Catholic Church exhorts her pastors to encourage her people to read "the Holy Scriptures." Even after all that had been said before, they might expect this declaration would excite some astonishment, as so many living witnesses could attest the reverse. They proceed, therefore, to give some explanation. "The Catholic Church," they say, "has never forbidden the reading of the scriptures, in the original languages." This may be granted; but it is to be remembered that there have been, comparatively, very few besides the clergy, who could read the scriptures in the dead languages: and of those who could read Hebrew and Greek, there have been still fewer in Popish countries who have evinced any desire to search the scriptures. Hence, their not forbiddiug them to be read in such languages, does not prove that they have not endeavoured to keep the scriptures from the people n general. They further state, that "there never was a general law of the Catholic Church, prohibiting the reading of authorized translations of the scriptures." If this also should be granted, it does not say that they have not made particular laws against reading the scriptures, in every place where people manifested any desire to read them; which may have prevented the people from knowing the scriptures, as effectually as any general law on the subject. "The Catholic Church," they say, "has thought it prudent to make a regulation, that the faithful should be guided n this matter by the advice of their respective pastors." The meaning of which is, that the priest is empowered to withhold the scriptures from whom he pleases, and this may answer the purpose of keeping the people n ignorance, as much, or more then a general law prohibiting the reading of them. What they say on the subject, is a tacit acknowledgment hat they forbid the reading of God's word. The charge is, therefore, established out of their own mouths, when they are exerting all their power to refute it. Their pretence for prohibiting the reading of the scriptures is, "that many have perverted the meaning of the sacred text, o their own destruction." To this, we reply, that St. Peter speaks of some who wrest the scriptures to their own destruction; but neither he,

nor any other apostle, ever intimated, that the scriptures were to be with
held from any one on that account. Those who under this vain pretenc
prohibit what Christ has commanded, might with as much propriety fo
bid the preaching of the gospel; for men are in as much danger of pe
verting what they hear, as what they read. Where the scriptures a
read, the morals of the people are much superior to those of any Popis
country. Whatever is the pretence, the real and only cause, as the
well know, of prohibiting the scriptures, is, to prevent the people fro
discovering their errors, and exploding their superstitions. But the bisho
say, "the Catholics in England, of mature years, have permission t
read authentic and approved translations of the holy scriptures, with ex
planatory notes." But we ask, Why is the reading of the scriptures re
stricted to those of mature years? since St. Paul commends Timothy fc
knowing the scriptures from his youth, which are able to make men wis
to salvation. And why is this permission restricted to the Catholics i
England? Have not the people in other countries as much need of th
scriptures, and as much right to that gift of heaven, which is profitabl
for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness? The
have permission to read approved translations with notes. But wha
kind are they likely to be, which will obtain their approval? Thos
who assume the right of approval, are those who have degraded the scrip
tures, by declaring that they do not contain what is essential to salvation
and, likewise, that their own traditions are of more importance than th
Bible. In a public meeting last year in Ireland, the Rev. Mr. Lyon
said, "We believe that the scriptures do not contain every thing necessar
to salvation. You have been told that the Bible contains the whole wor
of God, but we find that the most important part has been left unwritten.
They have degraded the Bible by declaring the apocryphal books to b
canonical. These books were not received as works written by Divin
Inspiration by the Jews, nor by the Christians, for the three firs
centuries: yet the Council of Trent, after enumerating such book
as Tobius, Judith, and the two Books of Maccabees, adds, "I
any man shall not receive these whole books, with all the parts of them
for holy and canonical, let him be accursed." Yet these books are de
clared to be canonical for no other purpose than to support Popish error
Those who here speak of approved translations, have designedly co
rupted the sacred text, to countenance their own superstitions; hence, i
that translation we read, that Jacob worshipped the top of his staff; an
in many places, where the original word signifies repentance, they ren
der it,—do penance. The translations they approve, are to be accom
panied with notes: and of these we have room to give but a very few
On Matt. xiii. 29. they say, "Heretics may be punished and sup
pressed."—"They may and ought to be chastised or executed." O
Rev. xvii. 6. they say, "The Protestants foolishly expound it o
Rome, for that they put heretics to death, and allow of their punish
ment in other countries: but their blood is not called the blood of saints
no more than the blood of thieves, man-killers, and other malefactors.

The University of Douay, declare their notes of the bible to be ver
useful for promoting good morals, and for propagating and defending th
Catholic faith; and among these notes, are such as the following:—
Deut. xvii. 8. "Here we see what authority God was pleased to giv

to the Church-guides of the Old Testament, in deciding, without appeal, all controversies relating to the law; promising that they should not err therein; punishing with death such as proudly refused to obey their decisions: and surely he has not done less for the Church-guides of the New Testamant." John x. 1, "Whoever cometh not in by Holy Church's ordinance, but breaketh in against order, is a thief and murderer. So came in Calvin, Luther, and all heretics." Luke xiv. 23, "Heretics may, by penal laws, be compelled to the Catholic faith." John xv. 4, "No salvation out of the Church," &c. &c. Such are the notes of the authorised translations which Catholics are permitted to read for the improvement of their morals, when the Priest pleases to grant such permission. But as they are taught from their infancy, that the most important part of their religion is not in the bible, it can scarcely be expected that they will have much desire to search after things of less importance; especially as they are not allowed to judge of what they read, and as a request for the scriptures might cause them to be suspected of heresy. With all these obstacles thrown in the way, their permission to read the scriptures differs little in appearance, and nothing in reality, from an entire prohibition.

At public meetings, lately held in Ireland, the Priests delivered their sentiments on reading the scriptures. The Rev. Mr. O'Connel said, "We want not the assistance of bibles to inculcate the principles of Christianity." The Rev. Mr. O'Beirne: "I have this day come forward to state my determination, as far as lies in my power, to impede the circulation of the scriptures without note or comment." The Rev. P. Daly: "I pledge myself to prove the pernicious tendency of the bible distributing system." Rev. Mr. Clewry: "We are opposed to the circulation of the bible, because we know it is calculated to undermine that Church which Christ has declared to have been built upon a rock." Rev. Mr. Nolan: "The Catholic Church fears not the efforts of the Bible Society: she opposes them with vigour, and approaches to the contest, like an army marching in battle array. We must oppose them, because they tend to subvert the principles of our religion." Rev. Dr. Doyle: "I heard of a poor man, in the county of Kildare, who, if I gave him a bible approved of by the Church, would venerate it more than any thing he possessed; but having been favoured by the lady of his master, with one of the Society's bibles, without note or comment, accepted of it with all the reverence which a fear of losing his situation inspired. But, behold! when the night closed, and all the danger of detection was removed, he, lest he should be infected with heresy, exhaled from the Protestant bible during his sleep, took it with tongs, for he would not defile his touch with it, and buried it in a grave, which he had prepared for it in his garden. I do admire the orthodoxy of this Kildare peasant;—nay, I admire it greatly; and should I happen to meet him, I will reward him for his zeal!" Rev. Mr. Hughes: "Whatever may be imagined of our doctrine, with regard to the reading of the scriptures, we will not allow them to be read indiscriminately. It is the principle of the Church, that the scriptures be not read without note or comment. She recommends the reading of them with deference to the interpretation of the Church: she orders them not to deduce from texts of scripture, any thing contrary to, or different from the Church.

It is in that way we allow the reading of the scriptures, and in no other. The indiscriminate perusal of the holy scriptures, is contrary to the constitution of the Roman Catholic Church, and renders conversion to her bosom almost impossible."

The opposition which these Priests avowed to the reading of the scriptures, was in perfect unison with the Pope's bulls, which were issued from Rome, to oppose the reading of the scriptures distributed by the Bible Society. One of these bulls, from Leo XII. appeared in the month of May, 1824, in which his holiness piously terms the Bible Society—a *"plague;"* and their efforts to spread divine truth—a *"wicked novelty;"* and the bible they distribute—the *"gospel of the devil!"* Another of the Pope's bulls is dated Rome, 18th Sept. 1819. In this, the Pope says, the directors of the Irish Schools—"are generally speaking, Methodists, who introduce bibles, translated into English by the Bible Society, and propped up with errors." When the Pope says the English version is a translation by the Bible Society, it shews he is entirely ignorant of what he asserts; and when, notwithstanding this ignorance, he declares it is propped up with errors, his word is unworthy of credit. We now leave the reader to judge, whether we have not established the charge, without going back to those times when the Church of Rome burnt people at a stake—for reading the bible.

The last charge mentioned by Mr. D. is, that they consign all the reformed Churches to damnation, except they turn Catholics. Against this, the Bishops declare, "they are not allowed to pronounce sentence of condemnation on individuals who may live and die out of the external communion of the Catholic Church. They leave all to the Great Searcher of Hearts, who will render to every man according to his works." If they had said this was what they ought to do, we should have given some credit to this part of their declaration; but when they declare it is what they actually do, it is either a notorious untruth, or otherwise, they are dissenters from the Church of Rome; and in either case the declaration does not refute the charge.

The Bishops declare that they are not allowed to pronounce sentence of condemnation on individuals, &c; but have they not anathematized and bound over to eternal perdition, all the different communities of Protestants; and in such a sentence of condemnation, is not every individual included? It would be a work of time to curse separately every individual of a hundred millions of people; but collectively, the business can be done at Rome, every Ash-Wednesday, with great convenience and it remains to be proved, whether it is not their own convenience they consult, when they curse whole communities at once. They may, indeed, have other reasons for cursing whole communities together; for did they only curse individuals, some would escape the greatest Jesuitical vigilence; and therefore they go a more sure way to work. From hence it appears, that the plea used by the Bishops, if true, does in a degree invalidate the charge. The charge might be proved by the decrees of the Council of Trent, and by what their Priests have publicly avowed in ten thousand instances: but still some may suppose that Popery, on this article, may have made some change for the better. Let us therefore see what it is at the present day.

In the French national catechism, which was introduced into the

country by the sanction of the Pope, since their late Revolution, it is declared, that "there is neither holiness nor remission of sins, nor consequently, any salvation, or eternal life, out of the Catholic Church." In the same Catechism, it is asked, "Is the Catholic Church infallible?" And the answer is, "Yes: and those who reject its decisions are heretics." At a recent meeting, held in Kilkenny, Mr. Shearman, a Catholic Clergyman said, "I believe that good men of every persuasion may be saved, and I disclaim the doctrine of exclusive salvation." But Mr. Furlong, another Catholic Clergymen, afterwards addressed a letter to him, which was published in the *Kilkenny Moderator*, in which he charged him with mis-understanding and mis-stating the doctrines of his Church, and unequivocally retracted what the other had avowed. This letter, endeavouring to prove that all Protestants must be damned, is what the Catholic bishops in England cannot refute, without renouncing those Canons and Councils which they are sworn to maintain.

The impartial reader will therefore see, that every charge we had made against Popery was the naked truth, without any disguise or exaggeration: yet Mr. D. seems to imagine, that people cannot distinguish between a statement being contradicted, and its being refuted. Hence, when he has produced those parts of the Bishops' declaration which contradict the charges against their system, he proceeds to say, "*These specimens of his ignorance, this sporting with the credulity of his readers, will convince the inhabitants of Lane End of the impropriety of setting him up as a guide in the way of salvation. Why, it would be an insult upon the liberal inhabitants of the Potteries, to think that they believed the arrant nonsense which is contained in "Popery Unmasked," and its "Vindication." They really are a mockery of common sense, as the above examples evidently show.*"

This passage may be preserved in the cabinets of the curious, as a precious relic of Popish discussion, produced under the influence of all the science and liberality of the nineteenth century. In the mean time, we ask the liberal inhabitants, to whom an appeal is made, whether such scurrility, jargon, ribaldry, falsehood, and malignity, are not poor substitutes for truth, reason, and argument? and whether their understandings are not grossly insulted, by supposing them capable of mistaking the one for the other? Leaving Mr. D. to his own reflections, we regret that our limits do not at present permit us to follow the bishops through the whole of their declaration. If they had intended to be credited, they should have shewn, either that the declaration was consistent with the Canons and Councils of the Romish Church, or otherwise, that they dissent from that Church, on those points of doctrine which they now disclaim: as they have done neither, it can only have been ushered into the world for the purpose of deception. They would wish the public to believe that the obedience they have sworn to the Pope is not inconsistent with their allegiance to His Majesty, because the Pope only requires spiritual obedience. But has not the spiritual authority assumed by the Pope often hurled princes from their thrones? And has his claim to such power ever been relinquished? Do they not believe that the Pope, by his anathema, can exclude them from the kingdom of heaven? and can they be expected to

obey a temporal sovereign, who can only punish them with death, against a spiritual sovereign, who can punish them with eternal damnation. Should a Roman Catholic ever be a competitor for the crown of England what use they would make of the Pope's spiritual power may be judged of by the proceedings of the Popish priests, at the late elections in Ireland. "From fifty to sixty priests daily attended the poll booths. The freeholders were torn from their landlords by priestly authority—by the refusal of Church rites—by actual excommunication." "We have seen," says Mr. Maxwell, "Popish priests marching through our town at the head of immense mobs, encouraging them by example, and by precept to every species of disorder; we have heard them threatening with loss of property, and with personal injury, and, above all, with eternal damnation, such Roman Catholics as should vote contrary to their directions. The anathemas which were pronounced in our public streets, have been re-echoed from the chapels. Scarcely a Sunday has elapsed that some proscribed poor Roman Catholic is not marked out by his priest from the altar, as an object of vengeance. I myself have seen many poor Roman Catholics who have been way-laid and severely beaten, whose crops have been injured, and their property destroyed, merely for having voted for those candidates against whom the influence of the priests was directed." Such are the improved Papists of the present day, whom some of our infatuated countrymen would place at the helm of the state.

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A

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Scripture Doctrine.

&c.

ROMANS VIII. 33.

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?"

1. WE are informed, by St. Peter, that the Prophets searched diligently to know what the Spirit signified, when it testified before-hand, of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. In this respect, it is our duty to imitate the example of the Prophets, by searching diligently to discover the sense of the Spirit in the scriptures of truth. In acquiring the knowledge of truth, we have the promise of divine assistance; but this is not intended to supersede, but to encourage human endeavours. St. Paul recommended study and meditation to Timothy; who, from his youth, had known the scriptures, which are able to make men wise to salvation. In studying the scriptures, it is a common rule of interpretation, but not the less important on that account, to consider the scope and drift of the writer, and the existing circumstances of the people to whom they were written. This rule is to be applied to the words before us; Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? At this time, those who had embarked in the Christian cause at Rome, were suffering greatly, both from internal strife, and from outward persecution. The Apostle, enumerating their dangers and calamities, speaks of Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword; and adds, As it is written, For thy sake, we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Under such overwhelming calamities, their minds could only be supported by the hope of eternal blessedness; for if their hope

had regarded the present life only, they would have been of all men most miserable. The Apostle, therefore, sets before them an encouraging view of their eternal recompence; declaring that The sufferings of this life, are not worthy to be compared with the glory shall be revealed in us. But eternal glory can only support the mind in proportion as there is a prospect of attaining it; and whether the Gentile converts were in the way to the kingdom of God, was the point in dispute, by which the church at that time was greatly agitated. There was a strong party at Rome, who maintained that there was no salvation out of the Jewish community; that except Christians were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved. This notion, the Apostle sets himself to refute, and proves, that our justification before God, is not by the deeds of the law, but by faith in Christ; and that all who embrace the Gospel, are as much the chosen people of God, as the Jews were under the old dispensation. And having established this important position, he exclaims, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?

These words we purpose at present to discuss, only so far as is needful, to ascertain the scriptural meaning of the word ELECT, as applied to the people of God.

2. God's ELECT, are a people whom the Almighty has chosen for some particular purpose. Where a choice was to be made, they have had the preference to others: they have had some special tokens of favour bestowed upon them, and have been appointed to some distinguishing privileges. To this notion of Election, we are not aware that any objection will be made; it is therefore needless to aduce any authorities for its support, or to offer any arguments for its confirmation. But what the priviledge is, to which men are Elected, and on what condition the favour is to be finally possessed, are subjects on which men form very opposite opinions, and which have for ages furnished a copious source of disputation. Against the existence of Election, no body of professing Christians, will dispute; and as it is universally acknowledged to be a doctrine of divine revelation, it is a proper subject of religious inquiry: and it is very desirable that our inquiries should lead us to the knowledge of the truth. And if we could bring our minds to the investigation, unbiassed by any thing which has been advanced on either side of the controversy, the Word of God would be the more likely to conduct us to a right conclusion.

The word ELECT, or CHOSEN, which is a term of the same signification, frequently occurs in the Sacred Writings: a circumstance which makes its meaning more needful to be known, and more easy to be determined. If we take a general view of all the

places in scripture, where these words are used, with proper attention to the subject with which they are connected, one passage will illustrate another, and place the truth in the clearest light. To know the sense of the words under consideration, it is of importance to notice the period when they came into use, and the occasion which gave them birth. And here let it be remembered, that in all ages of the world, since mankind began to multiply on the face of the earth, there have always been righteous and wicked; those who served God, and those who served him not; but no part of them was ever designated Elect or Chosen, till that extraordinary dispensation commenced, which divided the world into Jew and Gentile. By this division or distinction of mankind, the terms in question came into use; and by a reference to that great event, the meaning of them is to be ascertained.

3. Before the Jews became a distinct people, iniquity abounded in the world, to an amazing extent. The Almighty had not left himself without witness among any part of the human race; but when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened; They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images made like to corruptible man, to four-footed beasts, and creeping things: They were full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, and malignity. To counteract this great and general corruption, the Almighty was pleased to select Abraham, and his seed after him, from all the rest of mankind, and to make them the repository of divine knowledge, and an example to the rest of the world.* To this family the Almighty revealed himself, visited them with several remarkable dispensations of providence, and at last formed them into a distinct nation, under his own immediate protection, and governed them by laws, delivered from Himself; placing them in the open view of the world, first in Egypt, and then in Canaan. This favour to the descendants of Abraham, was not merited on their part, nor was it granted for their benefit exclusively, but for the advantage of mankind in general. By this peculiar dispensation, the Jews were made the means of preserving in the world, the knowledge of the true God, of his providence, and of his holy word. So long as they continued obedient, their extraordinary happiness and prosperity, discovered to mankind, that there is a reward for the righteous; and when they were disobedient, their various and signal chastisements, shewed that God will not let sin go unpunished.

To answer these important ends of infinite wisdom and goodness the Jews were distinguished by privileges above all other nations. To them belonged the adoption—the glory—the giving of the law—the service of God—the promises—and the covenants. They

* See Dr. JOHN TAYLOR, on the Epistles.

had a written revelation of God's will—a succession of inspired prophets—all the ordinances of divine worship—extraordinary tokens of God's approbation—and the visible symbols of his presence. These favours, which were freely granted to the Jews, were to continue in their possession, if they would walk in God's statutes, and keep his ordinances. If ye will, indeed, obey my voice, said the Almighty, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people, although* all the earth is mine; and ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. In consequence of these peculiar blessings and privileges, the Jews were frequently stiled God's chosen people—his portion —the ransomed of the Lord—and the lot of his inheritance, Isaiah xlv. 4. Psalm cv. 43. Respecting these words and phrases, it is needful to be observed and kept in mind, that they never, in any instance, signify, an unconditional appointment to eternal happiness; nor is there the least intimation in the scripture, that those persons who are not called—Chosen or Elect, are on that account excluded from the kingdom of God. If the truth of this observation should be admitted, till some person was able to disprove it, the whole controversy about Election, would be at an end. That Election never implies the unconditional, infallible salvation of the persons elected, may be proved as clearly as any other truth in the Bible.

4. In the Old Testament, the most eminent saints were not stiled—Elect, unless they were members of the Jewish Community. Abel obtained the witness that he was righteous :—Enoch walked with God:—Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation:—Job feared God, and departed from evil :—Melchizedek was greater than Abraham, and was a priest of the Most High God. And there is no doubt but these eminent persons were in the divine favour, and found their way to heaven; but they were not termed God's Elect, because they were not distinguished from others by peculiar church privileges, to which Election, in the religious sense of the word, has always a reference. On the other hand, all the Jews, however immoral in their conduct, however hard-hearted and rebellious, were stiled God's Elect. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, notwithstanding their great wickedness, and dreadful punishment, were God's Elect people : So were the sons of Aaron, when a fire from the Lord consumed them in the act of their presumption : So, likewise, were all the disobedient Jews, who fell in the wilderness, of whom God sware in his wrath, that they should not enter his rest. Though many of the Jews lived in sin, and died without repentance, yet they were all called God's Elect people, because they were Chosen to peculiar privileges, and enjoyed distinguishing favours, which might have been improved to their spiritual and eternal advantage. It is, therefore, evident,

* So the original ought to be rendered.

that their election neither secured their own salvation, nor excluded any other people from the hope of eternal life.

The Jews, in every period of their history, were put upon their good behaviour: they had life and death set before them,—a blessing, and a curse. The word of God, with which they were intrusted, invariably declared, that they were to be rewarded or punished according to their actions: their election neither secured their obedience, nor exempted them from the penalty of disobedience. What David said to his son and successor, was equally true and applicable to every individual of the Jewish nation.—Thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. By such declarations of scripture as this, and by a reference to all the passages, where the words in question are used, we learn, that the Election of the Jews, never signified their unconditional, nor their exclusive appointment to eternal life; and by knowing the meaning of the Spirit in the Old Testament, we are led to know its meaning in the New.

5. The Jewish Church was succeeded, or rather superceded, by the Christian. When the Gentiles believed in Christ, they were admitted to all those spiritual honours and privileges, from whence the Jews had fallen by unbelief. When the natural branches were broken off, the believing Gentiles were ingrafted into the true olive tree, to partake of its root and fatness; that is all the privileges of God's visible church; which church they now constituted as the Jews had done under the former dispensation. Hence, the Christian community was now called the Israel of God, Mount Zion, and the Holy Jerusalem. And as those who had embraced the gospel had succeeded to all the spiritual immunities, and stood in the same relation to God, which the Jews had formerly done, they were entitled to the same peculiar and endearing appellations. Accordingly, they are addressed by the Apostles as the Called,—and Chosen,—and Faithful:—as persons predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ:—as elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience:—as a chosen generation,—a peculiar people,—a royal priesthood, to shew forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness, into his marvellous light. All these, and such like phrases, were used by the Apostles, in the same sense in which they had formerly been used under the old dispensation. They denoted the religious privileges which believers enjoyed in the present world, but they gave no intimation that any persons were unconditionally appointed to eternal life. For the terms Elect and Chosen, were applied to all the members of the Christian Church, without any discrimination of characters. St. Peter, for instance,

stiles all professing Christians Elect, who were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, I Pet. i. 1, 2. But among all these professors, it is reasonable to suppose, that many of them were not in a state of salvation, and who would be finally excluded from the kingdom of God. For our Saviour compares the gospel kingdom to a net, cast into the sea, which encloses a multitude of fishes, both good and bad, and when drawn to the shore, the good are gathered into vessels, and the bad are cast away. St. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, declares they are chosen in Christ, and predestinated to the adoption of children, Eph. i. 4, 5. But, that all the persons connected with that church, were true Christians, and would always continue such, is a supposition unsupported by any evidence, and contrary to all probability. They were all chosen and predestinated to gospel privileges; but the Apostle could not think that they were infallibly elected to eternal life; for he intimates that they were in danger of falling away, chap. vi. 13. And he declares that this would be the case with some of them. Of your ownselves, he says, shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them, Acts xx. 30. Yet these false teachers at Ephesus, are said to be chosen in Christ, and predestinated to the adoption of children; an evident proof, that these expressions have no reference to any unconditional appointment of individual persons to eternal life.

Our Saviour called all his followers Elect, or Chosen: he says, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit. But if this fruit was not brought forth, they were to be separated from the true vine; to become as withered branches, which are cast into the fire, John xv. 2, 6. Among the Elect or Chosen followers of Christ, Judas was included. I have chosen you twelve, says our Saviour, and one of you is a devil! From these instances it appears, that the terms Elect or Chosen, were applied to all the members of the Christian community, whether they were righteous or wicked, whether they would be eternally saved, or lost; and therefore these terms implied no unconditional appointment to eternal life, such an appointment is no where mentioned in the word of God.

6. We have seen that the word Elect, was applied in the Old Testament to all the Jews; and in the New, to all professing Christians, without any respect to their moral character, or to their final salvation; but in some instances it is used in a more restricted sense, denoting such as have so far improved their religious privileges, as to be meet for the kingdom of heaven. Our Saviour uses the word in this sense, when he speaks of sending his angels with the sound of a trumpet, to gather his Elect from the four

winds, from one end of heaven to the other. And the word seems to be used in the same sense, when he says, There shall arise false christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, inasmuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect: that is, those faithful Christians who have given diligence to make their calling and election sure. Such could not be deceived by all the great wonders which the false prophets could shew, unless on their own part there was first a giving way to unwatchfulness; and therefore our Saviour exhorted them to use great caution, Mark xiii. 22, 23. The word in question is likewise used in the same sense, when he says, Many are called, but few are chosen. In these words there is an allusion to the military customs of former times. When an army was wanted, all were summoned to appear who were capable of bearing arms; and out of these were selected such as were well qualified for the service, which were few in comparison of the multitudes assembled on these occasions. In like manner many are called by the gospel into the visible church, and out of these will be chosen for eternal life, only such as have so far improved their privileges as to be holy in heart and life, which are few compared with all who bear the Christian name. For straight is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

St. Paul uses the word Elect, for true Christians, when he says, Put on, as the Elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering. These graces are the marks of God's people. Those who possess them are truly God's Elect; for in them he takes great delight, and declares they shall be his, in that day when he makes up his jewels.

The Apostle likewise appears to use the word Elect, for true believers, when he says, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? This implies that the charges preferred against them were groundless. The Jewish converts were charged by their unbelieving brethren with apostacy from the law of Moses: and the Gentile converts were charged by the same persons with perverting true religion, and setting up a worship which had not the sanction of heaven. These charges the Apostle proves to be false, because the Christian religion is of God, and therefore those who embrace it, have the divine approbation. Having proved this point, he exclaims in triumph, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect; it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? If we understand him, when he says, It is God that justifieth, to mean only that God approves of their religious system, then the word Elect in this place is applicable to all professing Christians: but if by Justification here, is to be understood the pardon of sin, then the word Elect is to be restricted to such as have believed with the heart unto righteousness; for they only, in this sense of the

word, can be justified before God; and all are in this sense justified so long as they exercise that faith which works by love, and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.

The word Elect, denotes any object of choice: it is put for the appointment of individuals to certain offices: but as far as the doctrines of religion are concerned in the explication of God's word, the term in question is invariably used throughout the scriptures, in either one or other of the two significations which have now been pointed out. In the first place, Election signfies such persons as are appointed or chosen to church privileges. And, in the second place, such as have so far improved their privileges as to obtain a title to eternal life. Those who continue to live in sin will forfeit all the benefits of the first Election; but those who turn from their iniquities by repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, will obtain the benefit of the second Election. They will be the favourites of God in the present world, and will possess an eternal weight of glory in the world to come.

7. Another, and a very opposite notion of Election to that which has now been stated, is strenuously contended for by Calvinists of all descriptions. This now claims our consideration. The persons we have now mentioned, tell us, that Election signifies an appointment of certain individuals to eternal life.—That this appointment was made from eternity, and is altogether unconditional, having no respect to men's actions; for the small number Elected were no better than the multitudes who are left to perish;—that none who are Elected can by any means fail to attain eternal blessedness, and it is not possible for any individual besides to escape the damnation of hell:—that he who has appointed the end, has likewise appointed the means, consequently every Elect person will be irresistibly called to holiness on earth, as a qualification for heaven hereafter:—that the time for this call is so precisely fixed upon from eternity, that no person could have been converted a moment sooner or later than he is:—that the time fixed upon in the counsels of heaven, for the conversion of the Elect, may happen, and frequently has happened, to be the hour of death, or the last moment of their lives, after the vilest course of iniquity:—that persons who are not Elect, may be temperate, honest, beneficent, and fruitful, in what are called good works:—they may feed the hungry, clothe the naked, may profess the Christian faith; be serious and regular worshippers of God:—they may think themselves really righteous, and all their acquaintance may have the same good opinion of them; but because they are not Elected, eternal misery must be their inevitable doom. He that made them, will not have mercy upon them; and he that formed them, will shew them no favour. Such is the doctrine of Election mentioned by Calvinists. They may not state the matter in so many words; but what is here

laid down, is the sum and substance of what is found in their writings, as their avowed opinions on that subject.

8. Their opinions and ours on Election, are evidently incompatible, so that one or other of them must be rejected. Where such opposite opinions prevail, one party or the other will be found to be perverting the right way of the Lord.

If men are not free agents, no praise nor blame can attach to their actions, nor do they deserve either rewards or punishments. If one part of mankind cannot miss the way to heaven, and the other part cannot avoid the road to hell, then to speak of a future day of accounts, when God will bring every work into judgment, and render to every man according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil, is a contradiction to every dictate of sound reason, and a subversion of every rule by which mankind have ever been able to distinguish between right and wrong. But what principally induces us to reject Calvinian Election, is, that the whole fabric of that doctrine rests on mens' imaginations; for it is found, on examination, to have no foundation in the word of God. That any individual of the human race was unconditionally Elected to eternal life, is no where affirmed in the scriptures:—That all those persons who are not Elected, are left without a possibility of salvation, is a palpable contradiction to the whole tenor of divine truth.

9. The longest discourse in the Bible, on Election, is connected with the words of our text; and what is there meant by Election, has already been pointed out; but we have further to observe, that unconditional Election to eternal life, cannot be intended by the Apostle, because that is foreign to the scope of his discourse. Against a powerful faction at Rome, the Apostle maintains, that acceptance with God is obtained by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: that those who had embraced the Christian faith, constituted the true Church of God, to the exclusion of the unbelieving Jews. But it was granted that the Jews had been God's Elect people; and if that Election had been unconditional, they could not have been rejected for unbelief. The rejection of the Jews from being God's church and people, therefore demonstratively proves, that their Election had been conditional; and that the Election of the believing Gentiles, was so likewise, the Apostle most pointedly declares in the following words.

If some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off,

that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God; in them that fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness; if thou continue in goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again, Rom. xi 17-23.

By this passage we are taught, that the Jews, who had been the Elect people of God, had forfeited the privilege of their Election, by their unbelief; but that there was still a possibility of their restoration; and that they would certainly be restored if they did not continue in unbelief. We are taught, likewise, that the believing Gentiles, were become the Elect people of God; but that the privilege they had obtained, might be lost by unbelief. Hence the Apostle solemnly cautioned those who stood, of their danger, and earnestly prayed for the recovery of them who were fallen; which affords the fullest evidence that he was not speaking of unconditional Election to eternal life, because if any people were so elected, they could never forfeit their privilege; and those persons who were not so Elected before they came into the world, can never afterwards obtain that favour.

Concerning unconditional Election to eternal life, there had been no dispute among the Romans. Such doctrine had not been noticed among them; nor did it, for hundreds of years after that, obtain any advocate in the Christian church. It would therefore have answered the Apostle's purpose, to have introduced it, if it bore any relation to the existing controversy: but it had no connection with the abolition of the law, and the introduction of a new dispensation, nor with the terms of our acceptance with God, which were at that time the subjects of dispute, and the grounds of contention.

There were two parties in the Christian church; one of them contending that the rites and ceremonies of Moses, should be still observed; the other, that they ought to be relinquished: and how was such a dispute to be settled,—by a discourse on unconditional Election to heaven? God's Elect people had been commanded to keep the law of Moses; and if they were not to continue that practice, it must be for some reason foreign to being elected. There were at that time, likewise, two distinct communities among the Jews and the Christians, both professing to be the Elect people of God. This point could not have been settled by a discourse on unconditional Election to heaven, because such Election was irreconcileable to the way of sal-

ship, as the other. If the Apostle, therefore, understood himself, and wished to be understood by others, he could not have been speaking of an unconditional Election to eternal life.

A person may speak very wide of the point in hand, and at the same time advance what is useful for some other purpose; but if the Apostle was speaking of such an Election as has now been stated, the use of it is what no person has yet been able to discover. It could not promote the cause of morality, to tell men that their doom was fixed before they came into the world; and that their own actions, whether good or bad, could make no change in their eternal destiny. With respect to the Elect themselves, the doctrine in question could neither make their salvation more secure, nor increase its value: and with respect to the Non-elect, it could neither give them any future hopes, nor make them better satisfied with their present condition. It appears that St. Paul had great tenderness for the unbelieving Jews:—He tells us, that he had great heaviness, and continual sorrow in his heart for his brethren, his kinsmen, according to the flesh. For what purpose, then, did he tell them that they were not Elected to eternal life, consequently, that they could not escape eternal misery? If they were doomed to eternal perdition before they were born, it was useless to torment them before the time, by a discovery of their awful condition; since their future torments, could neither be avoided nor mitigated; and as their miserable condition was not the result of their own conduct, the discovery of it could not serve as a warning to others.

One design of the apostle in his epistle to the Romans, was to vindicate the ways of Providence, in the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles. And this he is seen to do effectually, if we allow him consistently to maintain, that the Jews were rejected for no other reason but their unbelief and disobedience: that after their fall, there was a possibility of their restoration, which would certainly take place, if they did not abide in unbelief: that, the reason why the Gentiles were admitted into the church, was, because they had believed and obeyed the gospel: that that if they did not continue to submit by faith, they would be rejected as well as the unbelieving Jews.

From such a statement, we may percieve that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him; but if the [illegible] commandments put on his words, do make to [illegible] difference which God makes between one man and another, both in time and in eternity, is the result of election—an election made without any respect to men's actions. In this case the [illegible] throwing any light on the ways of God to men, that he involves

the subject in impenetrable darkness; a darkness which every reasonable man will feel and deplore.

A person may speak wide of the leading design, without apparent absurdity, and unnecessarily without direct contradiction. But into both these faults, the apostle must have fallen, if he was maintaining the doctrine of unconditional Election to eternal life. Because he maintains that election comprehends nations and whole communities: that, Elect people may become Non-elect, and Non-elect may become Elect: that Election had not saved the Jews; their fall was the consequence of their own transgressions: that, the reason why they were not in the Divine favour, was, because they had not sought it by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the Law. At the same time, he discovered the greatest anxiety for their restoration, he made use of every argument he could devise, to induce them to embrace the gospel as the means of their salvation; and his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was, that they might be saved. These things are at such irreconcileable variance with unconditional Election to eternal life, that if he was maintaining that doctrine, he must have made himself disgusting, by absurdity, and contemptible by contradiction.

But if we allow the Apostle to be speaking of an Election to church privileges, which may be forfeited by unbelief and disobedience, then all he advances is reasonable, just, and good: his scheme throughout is consistent, his illustrations appropriate, and his arguments conclusive. The Jews were contending, that as they were Abraham's children, they could not be rejected; and that none could be the people of God, except they were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses: against these assertions, the Apostle maintains, that faith in Christ, and not the observance of the law, is the scriptural way of salvation:—That the believing Gentiles were become the Elect people of God—a privilege they had obtained by special favour, as did the Jews of old:—That the Jews obtained their privileges by special favour, he proves by a reference to the case of Jacob and Esau. For the children, he says, being not yet born, neither having done good or evil. That the purpose of God, according to Election, might stand, it was said to Rebecca, The elder shall serve the younger.* This relates to

* 'Agreeable to the purpose of God, according to Election, it was said to Rebecca, the elder shall serve the younger; but to serve, in scripture, never signifies to be eternally damned in the world to come; consequently, the opposite blessing, bestowed upon the posterity of the YOUNGER, could not be eternal salvation, but some privileges in this life. Therefore the purpose according to Election, refers to such privileges.

The circumstance of Esau's being elder than Jacob, was very properly taken notice of, to shew that Jacob's Election was contrary to the right of primogem-

their posterity; for in this sense only, did the elder serve the younger; and if the purpose of God, according to Election, had been to confer eternal life on the Jews, without any regard to their actions, it must have been his purpose too, in the same manner, to have consigned the whole posterity of Esau, to eternal damnation, before they had done either good or evil. This is not only the most dreadful thought that could enter the mind of man; but it stands in direct opposition to the Apostle's argument, which went to prove that the posterity of Jacob were now rejected, and the believing Gentiles, (among whom might be the decendants af Esau,) were now become the Chosen people of God. We are therefore, to understand this election to relate to church privileges, which God had formerly granted gratuitously on the Jews, and in the exercise of the same sovereign right, had now conferred them, in the same manner, on the believing Gentiles. This election is

ture, because this circumstance proved it to be from pure favour. But if his Election had been to eternal life, the circumstance of his age ought not to have been mentioned, because it had no relation to that matter whatever.

Should it be asked, why God, in the distribution of his spiritual favours, hath preferred one nation or person before another, the Apostle bids us answer, Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make out of the same lump, one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour? The very same right which entitled God to make some of his creatures angels, and some of them men, entitled him to place men in the endlessly various situations in which we see them. Nor can those who seem to be the most unkindly treated, complain of the want of Revelation, or of any other advantage, which God hath thought fit to withhold from them, since, at the last day, none shall be condemned for the want of these things; and in judging men, due regard will be paid to the circumstances of each; so that the sentences passed will all be according to truth, as the Apostle has taught in the second chapter. Wherefore, since men may be saved, who have not enjoyed Revelation, the giving, or the withholding of that benefit is to be considered, not as the appointing of men, either to salvation or damnation, but merely as placing them in more or less advantageous circumstances of trial.' MACKNIGHT.

Dr. DODDRIDGE, on this passage observes, that—'These words, in connection with the preceding and following, do, indeed, prove, that God acted with a sovereign freedom, accountable to none, in the dispensation of his favours, and consequently prove, that it was not upon the foresight of the obedience and piety of Jacob on the one hand, or the profaneness of Esau, on the other. That this preference was given; for then the argument taken from the having actually DONE NEITHER GOOD NOR EVIL, would be very weak: Nevertheless it is certain, that the Apostle does not here speak of the eternal state of Jacob and Esau, (whatever some may suppose deducible from what he says), nor does he, indeed, so much speak of the persons, as of their posterity, since it is plainly to that posterity that both the prophecies which he quotes in support of the argument refer. Gen. xxv. 23. Mal. i. 2, 3. HIS LAYING WASTE THE HERITAGE OF THE EDOMITES FOR THE DRAGONS IN THE WILDERNESS, is so different a thing from his appointing the person of Esau, to eternal misery by a mere act of sovereignty, without regard to any thing done, or to be done by him, to deserve it; that I will rather submit to any censure from my fellow-servants, than deal so freely with my Maker, as to conclude the one from the other.'

consistent with all the Apostle advances on the subject. But unconditional Election to eternal life, disagrees with all the arguments he brings forward, and stands in direct opposition to the drift of his whole discourse.

10. We reject Calvinian Election, because it limits the benefits of Christ's death, to a select few, and deprives all the rest of mankind of all interest in the Saviour's merits and grace. And the scripture declares the Atonement of Christ to be designed as a benefit to the whole human race. The scriptures which speak of the Universality of the Atonement, may be ranked in four classes.

The first class of scriptures which we shall mention, are those which speak of Christ as a benefit for the world, without any intimation that any part of mankind, are designedly excluded. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. My flesh, which I give for the life of the world. For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. We have seen, and do testify, that God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. For he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.*

A second class of scriptures, declare Redemption to be for all,

* 'By the term World, Calvinists understand God's elect people only, but no instance can be produced to prove that the term world is ever used in this sense in any part of the scriptures. We shall find that the construction of the passage makes againstthis interpretation: for instance, we read that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish. Here the distributive particle, WHOSOEVER, supposes a possible difference in the things distributed; and if the word WORLD, signify the Elect only, it necessarily implies, that some of the Elect, might possibly not believe, and so perish everlastingly. That by the term WORLD, is not meant the Elect, is evident also, from the words immediately following; For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world; but that the world through him, might be saved, John III. 17. The conjunctive particle FOR, plainly shews that the term 'World,' is used in the same sense in this verse, where the condemnation of it is spoken of, as in the former Now, to make our Saviour say that God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the Elect; but that the Elect, through him, might be saved, is to make him speak as never man spake; but not for excellency of wisdom, but for weakness. To say that God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the Elect, were but to beat the air, or to fight against a shadow; that is, solemnly to deny that which no man was ever likely to imagine. For how could it ever enter any man's mind, that God would send his Son into the world to condemn those, whom out of his infinite and sovereign love, he had from eternity decreed to save with a strong hand, and an invincible power ?'

and for every man. Christ gave himself a ransom for all. It pleased God that he should taste death for every man. For we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which henceforth live, might not live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them. As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all to justification. He is not willing that any should perish, but that they should come to repentance, and live. God laid on him the iniquities of us all. Behold we bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to you, and unto all people: for there is born, this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

A third class of scriptures, exhibit and promise salvation through Christ, to whosoever believeth. For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. Of him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins. He

* We are told by such as support the opposite doctrine, that the passages above, are not to be understood of the whole human race, but only of some of all sorts of people; because passages expressing Universality, are often to be taken in a limited signification. To this we answer, that neither the terms we speak of here nor any other scripture expressions, are on any pretence whatever, to be taken out of their proper and best known significations, but only when the context, or some particular circumstance, requires such a construction. And it is evident, with respect to the passages in question, that there is no necessity at all, either from the contexts, or from any other circumstances, to understand the terms of Universality any otherwise than in their most proper and extensive signification. The Apostle tells us, that Christ gave himself a ransom for all, 1 Tim. ii. 6. Immediately before he has told us, that Prayers and intercessions should be for all men; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. Now it is evident, that the word ALL, in both these passages, should be taken in the same extensive signification. It is a good reason why we should pray for all men, if Christ gave himself a ransom for all. But this reason does not hold, to pray for all, if Christ only died for some of them, and the rest cannot be profited either by our prayers or their own.

Because we thus judge, says the Apostle, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again, 2Cor. v. 14. 15. From these words it is evident, that Christ died for all who were dead in trespasses and sins. Moreover, if by the word ALL, the Apostle had meant the Elect only, he would not have added, THAT THEY WHO LIVE. For these words clearly imply, a possibility at least, that some of those all, for whom Christ died, would not live. In Heb. ii. 9, the Apostle declares, that Christ tasted death for every man, and for any person to say, that for every man we are only to understand a very few, is not to explain, but to contradict the scriptures. It is to lay upon them a burden of Calvinian prejudice, which they are not able to bear. It is to deface their beauty, and extinguish their lustre. Such teachers corrupt the word of God, to make it correspond with their own corrupt system; and when we ask such fathers for bread, they give us a stone,—when we ask for a fish, they give us a serpent.

that cometh unto me, I will no wise cast out. He that believeth in me shall never thirst. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all, that believe. I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth.*

A fourth class of scriptures, are such as speak of Christ dying for those who will actually perish. Now, if Christ died for any who will not be saved, it follows that he died for all without exception. This will have the consent of all parties: for none who admit the possibility of any perishing for whom Christ died, will deny that he died for the whole human race. And that men may perish, who have been redeemed, pardoned, and sanctified, by the blood of Christ, the scripture plainly asserts, and fully proves. Destroy not him with thy meat, says the Apostle, for whom Christ died. And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died. St. Peter speaks of some who deny the Lord that bought them, and thereby bring upon themselves swift destruction. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we read, He that despised Moses's law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be

* The first scripture on this List, is that where Christ is compared to the serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness. Now it is very certain that Moses did not lift up the serpent with an intent that only such a certain determinate number should be healed; but that whosoever would might look upon it, and that whosoever being stung with the fiery serpent, did look upon it, should be healed thereby. Therefore all men being stung by that fiery serpent, Sin, unless Christ had been lifted up on the cross with an intention that every man should believe in him, and every believer be saved, he could not be said to be lifted up in the same manner that Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. In all these scriptures, it is evident that salvation is exhibited and promised to all without exception, on condition of believing; so that ministers of the gospel, may say to every person, If thou believest thou shalt be saved. Now if God promise salvation on such terms, certainly he hath it to bestow, otherwise he would offer what he is not able to confer; and if he has salvation for them, he must have it in Christ. That salvation through Christ is offered to all, on condition of believing, will not be denied, and they must either have a power to believe, or be without such a power. If they have no such power, it is a disparagement to the Almighty to offer salvation on impossible terms. If they possess such a power, there is a possibility of them exerting it, and if they exert such a power, the promise of God would fail to them for whom Christ had not died. And it will not mend the matter to read that God knew they would not believe, for he knew likewise that he had no salvation for them; and to profess such great kindness for them, when he did not possess any, would be the most degrading duplicity and dissimulation. Hence those who maintain that Christ only died for a part of mankind, and that God offers salvation to all, attribute a conduct to the Almighty, of which any honest man would be ashamed. They degrade the glory of the Divine Being, more than those who changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into images made like to corruptible man, to four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God; and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace. In one of our Saviour's parables, we have the following words. —His Lord said unto him, O thou wicked and slothful servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me, shouldest not thou also, have had compassion on thy fellow-servant? And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentators, till he should pay all that was due to him. So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your heart forgive not every one his brother his trespasses *

As a proof that Christ died for all, without any exception, we may alledge. The total want of evidence on the other side of the question. Within the whole compass of divine revelation, there is not a single passage to be found, which declares, that Christ did not die for the whole human race :—There is no passage which speaks of him dying for only a part of mankind :—There is no passage which gives the least intimation that there is any individual among men, for whom the Redeemer did not shed his precious blood. So long, therefore, as we are influenced by the testimony of God's word, we must reject that doctrine of Election, which limits the death of Christ to a select few.

11. We reject Calvinistic Election, because it cannot be reconciled with the perfections of God. It cannot be reconciled with Divine Wisdom. Wisdom has always a worthy end in view, and uses the fittest means to accomplish its purpose in every scheme it deviseth: there is consistency in all its parts, and among all its dictates there is no contradiction. However complicated the plan, one part

* Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died, Romans xiv. 15. See likewise. 1 Cor. viii 11. This injunction plainly supposes, that such persons, for whom Christ died, may be destroyed, and perish everlastingly. Otherwise we shall eclipse the zeal and tenderness of the Apostle, over the precious souls of weak Christians, expressed in this solemn charge, NOT TO DESTROY THEM! yea, and make him speak in a very weak manner, and even ridiculously. To admonish men in the most serious manner, to take heed of destroying those, who are out of all possibility of being destroyed, is as foolish and weak, as if a man should seriously and affectionately intreat a fowler not to present his fowling-piece too high, lest he should shoot the sun, and cause him to fall down out of the firmament of heaven. Another text, mentioned above, is, There shall be false teachers among you, who shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, 2 Peter ii. 1. Here it is evidently supposed, and in the plainest terms, that men, bought by the Lord Christ, may, and that some of them will bring upon themselves, destruction. If so, then it is undeniably clear, that the Lord Christ bought those that perish, with the price of his blood, as well as those that are saved; and consequently all men without exception.

does not counteract, and render the other useless. In its work there is an uniformity of design, which all its various measures contribute to produce :—what one hand builds up, the other does not throw down. But unconditional Election to eternal life, breaks the harmony of divine revelation, destroys the influence of its doctrines, and renders them null and void. The scripture declares, that God will render to every man according to the deeds done in the body. It threatens eternal misery to the wicked, and promises eternal life to the righteous. It abounds with expostulations, warnings, and admonitions, and with the kindest invitations to all the riches of gospel grace: yet in all these various parts, we see unity of design; they all tend to promote holiness in this world, as the means of happiness in the world to come. But the same scripture is supposed to inform us, that every man's destiny is fixed before he comes into the world, without any regard to his actions, and which no conduct of man can afterwards change, for either better or worse. That the Elect cannot miss of heaven, nor the Non-elect by any means avoid the damnation of hell. This is as much as to tell us to pay no regard to God's threatenings, warnings and admonitions: for if we are Elected, nothing can harm us: and if we are not Elected, nothing can save us. Such a discordant and contadictory system, cannot come from the Fountain of Wisdom.

Calvinistic Election cannot be reconciled with Divine Goodness. In the exercise of this attribute, God takes special delight, Micah vii. 18. While judgment is his strange work, Isa. xxviii. 21. He is slow to anger, but abundant in goodness. Mercies are bestowed every day, while judgments are inflicted but now and then; and after a long time of forbearance. Goodness is gratuitously bestowed; but judgments are never inflicted but where they have been richly deserved. Goodness is frequently and abundantly conferred, where it might have been spared. Judgments are never inflicted, nor in greater measures, but as the circumstances of the case indispensibly require. It is the property of goodness, to be without partiality and hypocricy; full of mercy, and good fruits. Human goodness is lost in comparison of that which is divine; There is none good but one, that is God. Of his goodness, all creatures have been made to partake; and if they have not continued in his goodness, it was their own fault; For the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. But the splendour of this perfection, suffers a dismal eclipse by Calvinistic Election, and chiefly in that instance where its greatest lustre was intended to be displayed; in the redemption of the world, by our Lord Jesus Christ. When Christ was given, his merits were as adequate for the whole as for a part of mankind. All were in equal need of a Saviour, and no one was more worthy than another. All were equally related to the divine Being,

and all equally capable of receiving his favours. But the doctrine in question, states, that God gave his Son only for a select few, whom he had chosen for no reason in themselves, and abandoned all the rest to inevitable destruction. Now if this was the case, he might more properly be said to have hated the world, than to have loved it; because the greatest part of mankind never taste of his goodness in any one instance throughout the whole period of their existence. For all the good things, as they are called of this life, whether temporal or spiritual, will enhance their future misery, and this dreadful consequence is unavoidable on the part of the Nonelect. It is said that the tender mercies of the wicked, are cruel, and such are all the tender mercies bestowed on them who are left out of the scheme of Election. This doctrine, therefore, is what no ingenuity can ever reconcile with Divine goodness.

Calvinistisc Election, cannot be reconciled with God's divine holiness. God is glorious in holiness: and is of purer eyes than to behold sin, without indignation. But the doctrine in question, exhibits him in a very different light. The advocates of this doctrine, assert, that all the holiness in men, springs from their Election; and if so, it follows, that all the wickedness in the world, arises from the want of more Election. And it was an act of the Divine Will, exerted, for any thing that appears, without any reasonable ground, which limited Election to so small a part of the human race, and left the great bulk of mankind under the fatal necessity of continuing in sin all their days. In this case, it must have been the Divine Will for iniquity to abound in the world to all the extent in which it ever has abounded. Before the Flood, all flesh had corrupted its way, and the earth was filled with violence; there was a world of sinners to one righteous man, because only one man had been Elected, who was no more worthy than the rest: for his righteousness was not the cause, but the consequence, of his Election. If we, therefore, judge of the Divine Being by this doctrine of Election, we shall have reason to conclude, that he loves iniquity, and hates righteousness, and it will not alter this opinion, to be told, that no sin will endanger the salvation of the Elect, and that many of them continue in the grossest crimes to the day of their death.

Calvinistic Election cannot be reconciled with divine justice—The Lord, says David, is righteous in all his ways. The judgements of the Lord, saith Solomon, are weight and measure; that is, exact, and without exception. So apparently just is God, that he offers the justice of his ways to the trial of human understanding. Judge, he says, I pray you between me and my vineyard. He is content to prove his dealings just, by plain and evident arguments; Are not my ways equal, and your ways unequal? This Abraham well knew, when he said, will not the Judge of all the earth, do right? When these passages are compared to-

gether, we not only learn that God is just, but likewise, that his justice is of a kind, that can be understood by human beings. But we can see no justice in the divine government, if some are chosen to eternal life, and others left to perish, at a time when there was no difference in their moral state, and no difference afterwards, between one man and another, but what God makes himself.

That doctrine of Election which we reject, supposes that the Nonelect have have no interest in Christ nor at any part of their lives a possibility afforded them of escaping eternal misery. Hell is as sure to be their doom, as if they had already taken up their abode in that place of torment. When they are in this deplorable state, it seems both cruel and unjust to make them an offer of mercy which they cannot accept, and then punish them with increased severity, because they do not accept it: yet, if the doctrine in question be true, this is indisputably the case. Gospel grace is promised to them :—Christ, in all his saving benefits, is offered,—and the Holy Spirit strives with them : and though Christ did not die for them, they are required to believe that he did ; and they will be condemned for not believing it. Though they have no power to embrace the gospel, they are made responsible for having enjoyed its privileges; and their condemnation will be the more dreadful, for having neglected this great salvation : a salvation, from which they were utterly excluded, by the decree of Election. And their punishment will be more intolerable than that of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment. Such a scheme as this, must stand at eternal variance with every rational idea of justice.

Calvinistic Election, cannot be reconciled with divine truth and sincerity. Fenelon properly observes, that we should teach our children, that God is truth itself; and that to sport with truth, is to offend God. And the scripture declares, that the strength of Israel cannot lie. He is as far from deceiving others, as he is from being deceived. He regards all falsehood and dissimulation with utter abhorrence. But if he has appointed one part of mankind to endless happiness, and left all the rest to perish, his actions contradict his own declarations. In the distribution of rewards and punishments, he declares, his ways are equal: that he is no respecter of persons, He is long-suffering, not willing that any of us should perish. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his ways, and live. I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. "When the Almighty says, As I live, he would fain have us believe him; and therefore he bindeth his Spirit with an oath. Happy are we, for whose sake the Lord vouchsafeth to swear; but most unhappy, if we believe him not when he sweareth." But after all that God has both said and sworn of his unwillingness that any

should perish, the doctrine in question supposes that he has left the greatest part of mankind, out of the scheme of Election, the only means by which they could have been saved, and for no reason but his own pleasure. On this supposition it is so far from being true, that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, that his chief pleasure must arise from this source. This doctrine goes to prove, that when God says one thing, he means another; that there is so much evasion in his promises of mercy, and such duplicity in his tenderest expostulations, that he is not to believed upon his oath.

12. We reject Calvinistic Election because it is inseperably connected with Reprobation. By Reprobation, mankind are doomed to endless misery before they are born; a doom which their subsequent conduct can never reverse. This is a doctrine which no unprejudiced person can contemplate without disgust and horror. It is a mystical Babylon, full of blasphemy and abominations—a mystery of iniquity—the habitation of devils—the hold of every foul spirit—and a cage of every hateful and unclean bird. Some profess Calvinian Election and deny Reprobation; but with what consistancy this can be done, is the question. Upon a fair inquiry, it will be found, that these two doctrines are so dependant on each other, that they must both stand or fall together. Because every choice, does of necessity imply a rejection; and where there is no reason for the choice in the things themselves, there can be no reason for the rejection. If some are unconditionally elected to eternal life, others are not elected; and with respect to those not elected, no means has or can be devised, of rescuing them from the horrors of Reprobation: for we are told, that Christ did not die for any but the Elect; and without an interest in his death, there is no salvation. Since there is no salvation without an interest in Christ, the decree of the Almighty, which limited the benefits of his death to a select few, did, by inevitable consequence, consign all the rest of mankind, to devouring fire and everlasting burnings. If it be pleaded, that there is a difference between leaving men to perish, and appointing them to perish; we reply, that there is no difference as to the punishment to be inflicted, nor as to the impossibility of escaping it: and with regard to the act of the Almighty, we have yet to be informed wherein the difference lies. For if he has involved all mankind in the fatal consequences of Adam's sin, so that they cannot help themselves; and has excluded the greatest part of them from all the benefits of Redemption, his appointing them to perish, and leaving them to perish, amount to the same thing. It is frequently affirmed, that men perish by their own act and deed; but we ask, Is it men's own act and deed, that they come into the world in a fallen state? Is it by their own act and deed, that they are left without a Saviour? Can men in these circumstances save themselves? None of these questions can be answered in the affirmative, on the prin-

ciples of our opponents: on these principles therefore, it can never be made to appear that men perish by their own act and deed: and if they do not, the blasphemous doctrine of Reprobation is fully established. To avoid this consequence, every evasion has been resorted to, and every species of sophistry employed. Some calvinists, have gone so far as to maintain, that Christ died for all; but then in order to support their favourite doctrine of Election, they maintain at the same time, that though there is an universal remedy provided, the application of it depends on an irresistible influence of divine grace, which is granted to none but the Elect; and all those to whom this grace is denide, are of course involved in all the horrors of Reprobation. Thus it appears, this Election, however introduced, has always Reprobation in its train. They were both brought forth at one monstrous birth; and they must both be buried in the same grave.

13 Our prescribed limits prevent enlargement, any further than to observe, than when the notion which confines the death of Christ, to a small part of mankind, is exploded, universal, encouragement succeeds; there is not one of Adam's offspring, but what may attain the salvation of his soul Every thing appaling in the aspect of religion is removed, and all its heavenly lustre breaks forth. The gospel then truly becomes glad tidings of great joy to all people—proclaiming, Glory to God in the highest; and on Earth, Peace, good will to men. The desponding thought that I may be one of the Nonelect no longer tears the anxious breast, for the Lord is seen to be rich in mercy to all that call upon him. The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come; and whoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely. Thus we are led to draw water with joy from the wells of salvation, of which there is enough for all, for each, and for evermore..

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A VINDICATION

OF

"POPERY UNMASKED."

IN ANSWER

TO THE

REV. EDWARD DANIELS.

WITH A

REFUTATION OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION,

IN REPLY TO THE

REV. WM. RICHMOND.

BY ABRAHAM SCOTT.

ADVERSUS BESTIAS PUGNAVI EPHESI. PAULUS.

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A VINDICATION,

&c &c.

HRISTIANS are commanded to "prove all things; and hold fast that hich is good." This is principally to be understood of the duty of certaining what is essential to our own eternal salvation. What we ust do to be saved, is the most momentous question that can occupy e mind of man; because he is hastening towards a state, either of end-ss happiness or endless misery. But we have reason to hope, that this portant question is not of difficult solution: for we may soon discover at to "fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of an." It will, however, in the first place, be needful to know what are e commands of the Almighty. There are some, we are told, who cor-pt the truth, and who teach for doctrines the commandments of men; d it concerns us to know whether we belong to such a community, or hether we are members of the true church.

The adherents of Popery claim to be the true Church of God to the clusion of all others. They have frequently proclaimed it to the world, at there is no salvation out of their own community. Their conduct this respect has been thought to proceed from a want of charity; d a want of charity is no mark of a true Church: yet they may have her inducements for making such an exclusive claim. So long as they n induce people to believe it, they are enabled to rule with a high nd, within their own pale, by holding over the heads of the refractory, e terrors of excommunication, which, on their principles, will be fol-wed by eternal damnation. There is nothing so dreadful at any other rthly tribunal; for at any other they can only kill the body, and after at there is no more that they can do; but the Popish tribunal claims e awful prerogative of destroying both body and soul in hell. So long this is believed, they can rule with a rod of iron, and accomplish their n measures, let them be what they will. And besides giving them an solute sway over their own people, it may frighten others to unite with ir community. They may likewise be induced to set up the claim of be-; the only Church and people of God, in order to give some satisfaction their own minds; for they must know that their religion is so opposite that of every true Protestant Church, that if they allow the mere pos-ility of finding salvation out of their community, they can see very le chance of finding it within. But whatever may have been their lucement to set up this exclusive claim, it becomes us to examine foundation on which it stands; for if Popery be the right way to the gdom of heaven, all other Christians must have wandered out of it; d a wrong way is very likely to lead to a wrong end, which is no er than eternal destruction.

If we ask the Romanists how they prove themselves the only tru Church? we shall be informed, that the Church cannot err in articles faith; and that religion has been transmitted to them unadulterated fro Christ and his apostles. But this is mere assertion, which cannot be a lowed to pass for proof. The Jews might tell us their Church coul never err, and that they have preserved their religion pure which the derived from God. However, as a proof that the Romanists have nev erred, nor can err, they produce such passages of scripture as the follow ing:—"My Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have p in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth an for ever."—"I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write in their hearts:—they shall all know me, from the least of them to th greatest of them."—"The Spirit of truth will teach you all things, an will guide you into all truth." "Lo, I am with you always, even the end of the world." To this we answer, that these and all such pr mises are conditional: the Spirit here spoken of may be resisted, and th title here given to the Saviour's presence may be forfeited by transgre sion: for what communion has light with darkness, or Christ with Belial It is likewise to be observed, that some of these promises, and othe of like import, were made to the Jewish Church; and it is acknowled ed that the Jewish Church erred fatally, both in faith and practic the same kind of promises can therefore never render it impossible for th Christian Church to err. Besides, these promises no more relate to fai than they do to obedience; and the Church of Rome will acknowled that they have often failed in obedience; and if the promises do n secure obedience to God, they can furnish no security against an error faith; and even if they did secure faith without obedience, it would of no avail, because faith without works is dead. The devils believ and tremble! Christ will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, takin vengeance on them that obey not the gospel. Professors therefore wh obey not the gospel, have completely failed, as far as their salvation is co cerned: and such as have so far failed, can have no security again a failure in faith. It may moreover be observed, that the promises und consideration, and all such like, were no more made to the Church Rome than to other Churches, some of which were founded before th of Rome; but they do not all hold the same articles of faith; cons quently the Church must have erred; and if those Churches have err to whom these promises were first made, how can they secure t Church of Rome from error? The Greek Church, for instance, c plead the same promises for their security; but the Romans acknowled the Greek Church to have failed in articles of faith; how then does become impossible for them to err? Thus we see that all their prete sions to infallibility, are as unsubstantial as "the baseless fabric of vision."

The Romanists, however, maintain that their religious system has b transmitted down to them without any corruption, from Christ and apostles; and if so, it must correspond with the old and new Testame because our Saviour and his apostles would never propagate a religion opposition to the Bible. All scripture is given by inspiration of G and is a complete rule of faith and practice. Our Saviour says, "the

ore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken im to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain lescended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that ıouse, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." Hence it ap- ıears that our safety depends on believing and obeying the doctrine of Christ, and that doctrine is contained in the holy scriptures. On this ground the Romanists must prove their claim to be the true Church and ıeople of God, if they can prove it at all; for as far as religion is con- erned, the revelation which God has made in his word contains the ruth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Arguments drawn rom any other source, in support of articles of faith, or religious institu- ions, are inconclusive at the best, and when they contradict the word f God, they are evidently fallacious. To set up any other authority in pposition to the Scriptures, is to insult the Majesty of heaven; and to ttribute absurdity and contradiction to the fountain of wisdom, is blas- hemy. On scriptural ground we are ready to meet the advocates of ıe Church of Rome, and to prove that they have corrupted religion, and ave set up an idolatrous system.

The contrariety of that system to the word of God, may be seen by ny man of common sense, who will use his understanding. Let us sup- ose that such a man is brought up in the Church of Rome, without ver reading the Scriptures; and when he arrives at years of discre- on, let him be informed that the Bible comes from God, and contains a evelation of his will to mankind, and includes the whole sum and sub- ance of religion; and let it at the same time be put into his hand for erusal: and in this case, what would he expect to meet with, in reading from one end to the other? Would he not have reason to expect that e would find much said, either by way of precept or example, concerning ıe worship of Virgin Mary, whom he had so often heard addressed s the Queen of heaven, and the refuge of sinners? He might especially xpect this, if he had been taught to repeat ten prayers to Virgin Iary, for one to God Almighty. And would he not also expect to read f prayers to other saints, and likewise to the angels? He might indeed ɔnclude that the saints were more scarce at that period, but the angels ere as numerous, and as proper objects of prayer as they ever have been nce. Would he not likewise expect to hear much said respecting Purga- ɔry? How much departed saints were tormented in its flames, till ıey obtained a deliverance by the prayers of the Church? Would he ɔt likewise expect to find an account of five sacraments, besides baptism ıd the Lord's Supper, and something about communion in one kind?— Would not such a person expect to read of bowing to images, of the use holy water, of buying and of selling indulgencies, and likewise of the opitiatory sacrifice of the mass? How greatly then would he be sur- ised, when he found that not one of these subjects was ever mentioned the word of God? Let this person then examine another community professing Christians, where he will find all their religious institutions, ıeir doctrines and forms of worship, to correspond with the word of God; ıd if he be free from prejudice, and open to conviction, would he not ɔnclude that such a people were the true Church, because they were founded on the apostles and prophets, Christ himself being the chief ɔrner-stone?" Supposing him to be an honest inquirer after "the faith

once delivered to the saints;" he would immediately declare, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God."

Let this person be told, that the Church of Rome has laid many restraints on the reading of the scriptures: that during many dark ages they have confined them in an unknown tongue; and when translated, they have burnt people at a stake for reading them: and when they are not able to do this, they pour all manner of reproach on those who circulate the scriptures; and prevent them from being read, to the utmost of their power, either by secret artifices or open force. Let this person, at the same time, be informed, that the Protestant Community, not only allows the scriptures to be put into the hands of the people, but strenuously inculates the reading of them as an indispensible duty: that they labour without any fee or reward to translate them into all languages, that every man may hear in his own mother tongue, the wonderful works of God: that they annually subscribe nearly one hundred thousand pounds for the charitable distribution of the scriptures; and that they persevere in this labour of love, notwithstanding all the calumnies of their enemies, and all the obstacles thrown in their way. After such information, would such a person be at any loss to account for this difference of conduct in the two Communities, respecting the word of God? Might he not immediately conclude, that the Church of Rome opposes the reading of the Bible, because it does not correspond with their system, and that the reading of it will detect their errors, and explode their corruptions? And might he not likewise conclude, that the reason why Protestants are so assiduous in circulating the Bible, is because it contains the religion which they profess, and are wishful to propagate? So that a man who can read his Bible, with a desire to discover the truth, will soon be able to distinguish the true Church, from one that is corrupt; and it will be his own fault if he suffer his mind to be blinded by Popish sophistry. Hence we expect much good will be done by the circulation of the scriptures, which are able to make us wise to salvation. And we likewise hope that good will result from the opposition raised by the Church of Rome, against the scriptures; but this will be in a way they neither desire nor expect; it will convince every reasonable man, that the Popish religion is not to be found in the word of God, and that its advocates themselves are well aware of this, when they oppose the reading of the Bible, which "has God for its author, salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter." Thus the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of it will he restrain.

"The doctrine of human merit, is one of the principal foundations of Popery. This is the great Diana, for which some of the most experienced craftsmen in the world make shrines; and by so doing, get their living, and that a plentiful, and sometimes a splendid one too. They know full well, that without this doctrine, the grandeur of their church (which is the soul of their religion), would quickly fall to the ground. For, if there be no merit in human works, then no supererogation; and if no supererogation, no indulgencies; and if no indulgencies, then it is to be feared that the silversmith's trade would run low, and the credit of the Pontifical bank begin to fail; so that the spirit and life of Popery lies in a strong attachment to the merit of human works. Now take away

he foundation, and the house must fall. Beat down, by force of argunent, the doctrine of human merit, and the whole superstructure of Poery must come down, and the sooner the better.

Cardinal Lelbarmine, in his fourth book, and fifth chapter, De Pontifici Romano, has this monstrous passage, *"that if the Pope should hrough error, or mistake, command vices, and prohibit virtues, the hurch would be bound in conscience to believe vice good, and virtue vil."* Good God! that any thing, which wears the name of a Chrisian, or even of a man, should venture to own, in the face of the world, uch an assertion as this! for the iniquity of which, no name can be found n all the compass of language. When men of learning and ability give hemselves over to the defence of wicked interests, and a bad cause, it is ust in God to smite the greatest abilities, with the greatest infatuation, as n this case, and in the case of Ahitophel.

Such an ascendant have the Romish casusits over scripture, reason, and norality: much like what is said of the modern Jews, that their sense nd reason is so besotted, as to hold, that in case two Rabbies should appen to contradict one another, they are bound to believe those contrary ssertions to be equally certain, and the express word of God: such an ron-digesting faith do they possess. It is really a pity that there is no uch thing in Judaism as Transubstantiation for the further exercise f it.

The leading article in the Romish persuasion, is the Pope's supremay: an article this, so essential to the grandeur of the papacy, that with t the Pope would not care a rush for all the rest. The very cornertone of the English Reformation was laid in a just renunciation of this oint, for which our kings have lain under the papal curse, but God has urned the curse into a blessing.

As to the docrine of Infallibility, we look upon it as a sacrilegious inasion of an attribute, which belongs only to God. And we are as little oncerned, whether the Pope makes his decrees in cathedra, or extra cahedram. As no man has any other or better thoughts of a fox, while ie is in his hole, than when he is out of it.

As to Transubstantiation, we regard it as the greatest absurdity that ver was palmed upon the faith of mankind; and as great a degradation f religion, as could well be invented. It is the direct cause of idolatry, nd that of the worst kind; teaching men to give divine worship to a iece of bread. Can a man believe in this absurd doctrine, until he is ctually given up to strong delusion?

As to repentance, according to their tenets, it is a small and inconsierable matter. For, placing the very nature of repentance, only in sorow for sin, they distinguish this sorrow into two sorts. The first is conrition, which is a sorrow for sin, arising from the apprehension of its atural filth, and its contrariety to the holy nature of God. The ther is, attrition, which is any sorrow or remorse for sin, arising om the apprehension of danger by sin. Now, though they enjoin ie former, and recommend it; yet they maintain that a man dying ith attrition only, if attended with confession to the Priest, and bsolution from him, will undoubtedly be saved. Does not such a enomous assertion as this, open wide the flood-gates to all manner of

wickedness? We may lay it down as a certain mark, and a rul of judging, from which we should never depart, that whatever doctrin or tenet serves to encourage sloth, idleness, or sins is perfectly false?"

We wish to make every allowance we can for such as have been taugh Popery from their infancy, and have never seen its errors refuted, nor it absurdities exposed: yet no allowance we can make for them will lesse their danger. And as to their teachers, who read the bible, and at th same time propagate so many doctrines which are not to be found there but are opposed to both scripture and reason, we are strongly inclined t suspect, either, that they are downright cheats and impostors, or thei minds are blinded by the just judgment of God, as a punishment fo their sins; according to that awful declaration of the apostle, where h says, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that the should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed no the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." The Almighty may in flict this dreadful judgment by withdrawing his enlightening influenc from the understanding, or by giving a commission to the great deceive and spirit of falsehood, to seduce the sinner; an example of which w have in 1 Kings xxii. 22; and he may sometimes permit them to se lying wonders. The Church of Rome professes to have the power o working miracles: and though most of the miracles they have pretende to work, may have been impositions on the credulity of the people; yo it is not improbable, but the Almighty may have suffered the wicked on to do many things above human power, so as to cause them to believe lie, as a punishment for their abuse of the light of reason and revelatio Those who are thus punished are in the way to eternal perdition. "He is a deep place, and there are many steps of descent to the bottom of it Many obscure vaults to be passed through before we come to utter darkness: but still the way of error is the way to it. And as surely and na turally as the first dusk and gloom of the evening tends to, and at la ends in the thickest darkness of midnight, so every delusion, sinfully che rished, and obstinately persisted in, will in the issue, lodge the sinner i the deepest hell, and the blackest regions of damnation."

It is therefore very desirable that the pernicious and dangerous erro of the Church of Rome should be refuted, as they are a disgrace to ou common Christianity—as they are a cause of infidelity—and as the have a tendency to lead men to eternal perdition. The refutation o these errors is desirable, on account of the members of that Church, " God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment o the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of th devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." But if the members o the Church are so infatuated, as to reject the best intended admonitio and instruction, it is still desirable that these errors should be refuted fo the sake of others, lest they "be led away by the error of the wicked and fall from their stedfastness." If we cannot do the Romanists good the refutation of their false tenets may lessen their means of doing harm to others. With this view I lately published a pamphlet entitled "Po PERY UNMASKED," in answer to the Rev. W. Richmond; who has sinc been requested by some of their own people to reply to this Publication but this request he thought proper to decline, alledging that the pam

phlet was *such as no person of education would read; or even such as no man of reason would read.* At the same time it was read, commended, and circulated, by several very respectable Clergymen of the Establishment. But this may not be regarded by the Romanists as any contradiction to his statement; for as they deny any salvation out of their own Church, they may with equal propriety deny that there can be either education or reason out of their own community. The public, however, will regard Mr. R's statement as the effusion of spleen, and the quintessence of bigotry; and will believe that he had a much more substantial reason for not answering the pamphlet, than any he has assigned: and that he would have done himself more credit if he had either said nothing, or acknowledged his inability to make any proper reply. When Mr. R. had refused, it seems the Rev. E. Daniels formed a resolution to reply, by giving a lecture on the subject, in his own Chapel, at Lane-End. And on this lecture we shall make a few remarks. After he had announced his lecture, and had signified that it was not to be printed, he was asked if he would suffer his opponent to make any reply, either during the discourse, or at the conclusion; but this he would not permit; and as the bulk of his auditory could not be collected at any other place, the only mode left of refuting what he advanced, is through the medium of the press.

It appeared during the course of the Lecture, that the pamphlet had given him great offence, but he was unable to refute any one argument therein advanced against their tenets; nor could he prove that any of its charges against their community were unfounded; or that any of its historical statements were incorrect. But his want of truth and argument, was abundantly supplied by mere assertion, evasion, detraction, and falsehood, as we shall proceed to point out.

He charged the author of "Popery Unmasked," with scandalizing the members of their community, by giving them such names as, "*Papist,*" *and* "*Romanist,*" *when their proper appellation was* "*Catholic.*" But if there be no scandal in calling the Bishop of Rome Pope, there can be none in calling his adherents Papists, the latter appellation being derived from the former, and is used in the same sense, and serves only to distinguish those who acknowledge the Pope's authority, from such as either never did acknowledge it, or have since thrown off his yoke. To call them Romanists, is merely to say that they belong to the Church of Rome; which is said with as much propriety of speech, as that others belong to the Church of England, the Lutheran, or Greek Church. The word Catholic denotes universal, and may be properly used either for all who profess Christianity, or for all real Christians, that is, for the whole of the visible, or the whole of the invisible Church; but in no proper sense of the word, can the Church of Rome be called Catholic, unless there are no other true Christians in the world; and this opinion they wish to establish when they claim the appellation of Catholic. But before this can be allowed, we must have more proof than can be found in the word Catholic. Mr. D's charge therefore falls to the ground, but the reader may think it was too contemptable for refutation; yet it is to be considered, that it is by such sophistry they blind the minds of their deluded followers; they declare themselves the only true Church, because they are

called Catholic. It is proper therefore to state, that they are only called Catholics by the abuse of language, as men sometimes call good evil, and evil good, sweet bitter, and bitter sweet. And when they are called Catholics, it does not state whether they are righteous or wicked, which is the only distinction that will be of any importance at the bar of God. If they are Catholic sinners, they are in the way to Catholic darkness and destruction.

Mr. D. complained that their unexpected opponent fell upon them with a determination "*to cut them in pieces, and saw their bones asunder.*" In reply to this, it may be observed, that to prevent the language he used from being misunderstood, he ought to have stated that their opponent's hostility was against their opinions, and not their persons; that he wished them always to have the liberty to worship God in their own way, and to have the same protection as any other of his Majesty's subjects; and was glad that they could vindicate their own sentiments in perfect security. Had Mr. D. made these statements, his conduct would have been more in conformity to the rule of doing to others, as he would have them to do to him.

Mr. D. objected to the charge contained in the following sentence:—*For some centuries before the reformation, ignorance and wickedness prevailed in the Romish Church, to a most enormous extent.* He said, admitting the Church of Rome to be as immoral, as was stated in the pamphlet he held in his hand, "*it was no concern of ours; for what had we to do with people who are dead and gone?*" But it is needful to remind him, that this was not answering, but overlooking his opponent's argument. The point under discussion was the uncertainty of oral tradition, in the support of any article of faith which cannot be proved by Scripture; when this tradition had to come down to us through such a channel of profligacy and licentiousness. It was stated, that lewd women bore such sway at Rome, as to appoint Bishops, and thrust their own gallants into St. Peter's see; that some were advanced to the pontifical dignity who had never touched any more than the cover of the Bible; and that the Priests were become vile and despicable; following nothing but sports and debauchery; living in drunkenness and whoredom. And if so, how can we depend on any religious tradition they have transmitted? If they paid so little attention to the written word of God, is it likely that they would be attentive to any verbal instructions relating to the doctrine and discipline of the Christian Church? If they minded nothing but sport and debauchery, how did they happen to learn these traditions with that accuracy, that they are now to be received as having equal authority with the word of God? If it could be supposed that they took care to learn these traditions, what dependence can we place in their fidelity in transmitting them to us uncorrupted? The reader may therefore see the reason why Mr. D. choose rather to evade, than to answer the argument against oral tradition.

He then proceeded to oppose the charge, *by denying the truth of the statement*; and this would have been speaking for once to some purpose if denying a fact was the same as disproving it; but they are not altogether the same, for there are some things which cannot be disproved but there is nothing which may not be denied.

The profligacy and ignorance of the Roman Church, in the tenth century, is what any man may deny, but what all the men in the world cannot disprove. Lewis Ellis, Dic. Pin. was a Roman Catholic, and was disposed to exhibit their Church to the best advantage; yet in his Ecclesiastical history he admits, that "most authors who have spoken of the tenth century, represent it as an age of darkness and ignorance, of blindness, of confusion, and disorder." He further says, "I am of opinion it is best to confess, that though there were some holy persons, and some intelligent people in that age, yet it cannot be denied, but that ignorance, vice, and irregularity prevailed in the greatest part of the world. It is true, there have been disorders in all ages; but it cannot be said, with any show of truth, that they were equal to those of the tenth century; that they spread so far, or were so universal."

Mr. D appeared conscious that a mere denial was not sufficient, and therefore proceeded to give what he called a proof; he contended "*that they could not be so immoral and licentious, because they built so many fine Churches, such as Lincoln Cathedral.*" It will be admitted that they built fine Churches, but whether this be an infallible evidence of holiness of heart and life may perhaps be questioned. There is no command for the building of them in the New Testament. The primitive Christians did not build such Churches; and as there may be true piety where there are no fine Churches, so there may be fine Churches where there is no true piety. The heathens built many grand temples; that at Ephesus was the wonder of the world; but at the same time "it was a shame to speak of those things which were done of them in secret;" so that the building of splendid temples is no proof of the purity of morals. Men have often been forward to do great things under the shew of religion, providing they might gratify their corrupt inclinations. The Prophet Micah introduces the people enquiring, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?" The greatest and most costly sacrifices they were ready to offer, rather than to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. "And what is the mystery of all this, but that men hate to be reformed; and for this reason they will be content to do any thing, rather than be put to the trouble of mending themselves: every thing is easy in comparison of this task: and God may have any terms of them, so that he will let them be quiet in their sins, and excuse them from the real virtues of a good life." To the Jews, in the time of the Prophet Isaiah, it is said, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord; I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth,—your hands are full of blood." If such a multitude of expensive sacrifices were offered by men who were living in the vilest wickedness, then elegant temples may be built by men of the same description. Besides the pomp of their service, and the magnificence of their temples, not only gratify their own ambition, but excite a kind of awe and veneration among the people, which tend to hide their own defects, and extend their influence; the most splendid temples may therefore be built without any pious motive.

The Church of St. Peter, at Rome, is superior to the Cathedral at Lin coln, to the Minster at York, to St. Paul's, in London, to St. Sophia, i Constantinople, and even to the Temple which was built by Solomon.— For splendour and magnificence it has not its equal in the world. Bu that it was built from motives of piety does not appear from the conduc of many who had the management of it. One of these, if I mistake not was Pope Alexander VI. of whom Mosheim says, "the crimes an enormities that history has imputed to this Papal Nero, evidently prov him to have been not only destitute of all religious and virtuous principles but even regardless of decency, and hardened against the feeling of shame he had four sons of a concubine, with whom he lived many years, amon whom was the famous Cæsar Borgia; a daughter named Lucretia, wa likewise among the fruits of this unlawful commerce; the tenderness o the Pontiff for his spurious offspring was excessive, beyond all expres sion; his only aim was to load them with riches and honours; and in th execution of his purpose, he trampled with contempt upon every obsta cle, which the demands of justice, and the remonstrances of religion, lai in his way." According to the same historian, while that fine Churc was building at Rome, "the monastic societies were so many herds o lazy, illiterate, profligate, and licentious Epicureans, whose views i life were confined to opulence and pleasure."

Some of the methods taken for the building of this Church were fa from being justifiable. "Pope Leo X. made a new publication of indul gencies, on the pretence of the want of money to finish the Church o St. Peter, at Rome. It was pretended that these indulgencies were take from a rich and inexhaustible treasury, in which were deposited the su perabundant good works of the Saints, united with the infinite merits c Jesus Christ; that they were at the disposal of the Pope, and might b applied not only to the remission of penance in this world, but to a de liverance from the pains of purgatory, and final condemnation in a futur state. Leo conferred the right of promulgating these indulgencies i Germany, together with a share of the profits, to the Archbishop of Mag deburgh, and he employed as his agent John Tetzel, a Dominican friar a man of profligate manners, who had been sentenced to death for th crime of adultery, but had been pardoned. Tetzel, assisted by the monk of his order, went forth to proclaim these indulgencies, and they magni fied their office. Among other things, they said that the red crosses ele vated in the Churches in which they preached, with the arms of the Pop annexed to them, had the same virtue as the Cross of Christ; that a soon as the sound of the money which was paid for the indulgencies wa heard in the bason in which it was received, the souls for whom it wa given, were released from purgatory—that repentance and contrition wer not necessary—that the efficacy of these indulgencies was so great, tha all sins which could be imagined might be remitted and expiated b them—that no crime was unpardonable but that of despising these indu gencies. These assertions the confessors were obliged by an oath not t contradict, but to confirm. The form of absolution used by Tetzel is a follows:—"May our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee, and ab solve thee by the merits of his most holy passion; and I, by his autho rity, that of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the most hol

Pope, granted and committed to me in these parts, do absolve thee, first rom all ecclesiastical censures, in whatever manner they have been inurred, and then from all thy sins, transgressions, and excesses, how enormous soever they may be, even from such as are for the ognizance of the holy see; and as far as the keys of the holy church extend, I remit to you all punishment which you deserve in purgatory on heir account; and I restore you to the holy sacraments of the Church, o the unity of the faithful, and to that innocence and purity which you ossessed at baptism; so that when you die, the gates of punishment hall be shut, and the gates of the paradise of delight shall be opened; nd if you shall not die at present, this grace shall remain in full force hen you are at the point of death, in the name of the Father, of the on, and of the Holy Ghost."

So much were the people blinded by ignorance and superstition, that wherever Tetzel and his companions came, they were received with triumph. At length, however, some persons began to be disgusted with heir conduct, for they observed that these preachers spent much of the noney which they obtained from the people, in taverns, and in places of ebauchery. But Tetzel threatened with the inquisition all who doubted the authority of the Pope; and in magnifying the virtue of indulgencies, e said, should a man have violated the blessed Virgin, he could absolve im both from the crime and the punishment. He said, that "whosoever should write against indulgencies, or the power of the Pope, must expect eternal damnation hereafter, and the most rigorous punishment at resent; for every beast that touches the mountain shall be stoned." And hen it is considered what methods were adopted, and what kind of persons were employed for the building of fine Churches, we leave it to any mpartial person to decide, whether the building of them is any proof gainst the profligacy of manners.

Mr. D. objected to the ignorance imputed to some of the Popish Clergy; and to refute this charge, he stated that "*they had ninety colleges.*" But this was no refutation: because those who have good pportunities do not always make a good use of them. He might as ell attempt to prove that they can have no immoral persons among them, ecause they have so many places of worship. The utility of their colges, for literary acquirements, we have no inclination to controvert; but s far as we are able to judge by some who have returned from them, we hink those colleges would be far more useful, if they could give intelect to some, and a disposition to diligence and piety to others. But hough he was unable to refute the charge of ignorance, he might, we dmit, have said something by way of palliation. For supposing one of he Priests to have all the learning which the best out of ninety colleges an give, what use is he to make of it? All critical and profound investigation of the sacred writings, must be a waste of time in a community here the sense of scripture is fixed by tradition, or absolute authority. Under such circumstances, whatever learning a man possesses, his mode nd extent of thinking are prescribed, from which he must not be known o deviate. If he makes the most extensive excursions in the search f truth, he must return to the point from whence he set out, nd must profess that point to be true, though he knows it to be false.—

... this case, his labour is not only in vain, but the discovery of w... dare not acknowledge may make him more uncomfortable and wher knowledge is hurtful, ignorance is useful. To a man in such a situation learning is like a jewel in a swine's snout. Besides, it has been an es tablished maxim in the Romish Church, that "*ignorance is the mothe of devotion*;" and those who have such a maxim to inculcate, may b supposed to do it more effectually if they add example to precept.

Mr. D. objected to the charge, that some of their Pontiffs had neve touched any more of the Bible than the cover. To refute this, he state that their rules required those in Holy Orders, to learn a portion of th Scriptures in every stage of their graduality. In reply, it is to be obser ed that the charge in question was made by one of their own people, an as the circumstances of the times renders it highly probable, no evidenc can be brought to contradict it. Their having rules which require knowledge of the Scriptures, does not prove that those rules are never vi lated. Martin Luther, an Augustine friar, and professor of theology i the university of Wirtemberg, had been some years at the college befor he took his master's degree; and afterwards, with a view to pursue course of studies more exclusively theological, he entered the Augustin Monastery at Erfurt; and he had been a year at the latter place, whe for the first time in his life, he saw a Bible; having till then, known onl those passages in Scripture which are contained in the liturgy and br viary. The Bible which accident seemed to have thrown in his way, h read with great avidity, and was surprised to find how small a portion the sacred writings was communicated to the people. Had he nev happened to see a Bible, it does not appear that it would have been an hindrance to his advancement in that Church.

The cavils of Mr. D. require us again to advert to the massacre of t Protestants at Paris; respecting which, an historian says, "There nothing parallel in the history of mankind, either for the dissimulatio that led to it, or the cruelty and barbarity with which it was put in ex cution. The Protestants, as a body, were devoted to destruction; t guards had been ordered to be under arms; the ringing of a bell w the signal; and the Catholic citizens, though unprepared for such a scen zealously seconded the fury of the soldiery, imbruing their hands witho remorse, in the blood of their neighbours, of their companions, and even their relations. Persons of every distinction, age, and sex, suspected adhering to the reformed opinions, were involved in one undistinguishe ruin. About five hundred gentlemen of rank, and near ten thousan persons of inferior condition, were murdered in Paris alone. The san barbarous orders were sent to all the provinces; and a like carnage e sued in Rouen, Lyons, and several other cities." In speaking of t transaction, Mr. D. did not attempt either to deny the fact, or to justi the measure; but endeavoured to vindicate their religion from the imp tation, by maintaining, that it was merely a political event; and th the Hugonots had attempted to depose the king. We admit that t French king told some such story as this: he pretended to have disc vered a conspiracy to seize his person; but this seems to have been mere pretext set up to cover his barbarous perfidy. If he had detect such a conspiracy, why did he not bring the conspirators to justice, wit

ut involving the innocent with the guilty? If religion had nothing to o with the transaction, how did it happen that all the Protestants, in very part of the kingdom, and they only, were involved in the proscrip-on? How came the citizens of Paris so eagerly to join with the sol-iers in the murder of their neighbours, friends, and relations? None ut Papists would have done this; nor could the Papists have been in-uced to do it, only on account of their aversion to the Protestant reli-ion. None but a Popish king, in any civilized nation, would have been uilty of such an act; nor would any Popish King, from any other motive an what arises from the bigotry and intolerance of his religious princi-les: and therefore the charge of that horrid crime will for ever remain at he door of Popery.

The rejoicing which took place at Rome, especially with the Pope, nd among the Cardinals, gives occasion to suspect, that the cruel act as contrived at that place: at all events, they made the crime their wn by adoption—by taking pleasure in them that did it. But the orst circumstance of this horrible transaction remains yet to be told; hich is, that the whole of this butchery was done in perfect consist-ncy with the principles of the Church of Rome. Had it been a viola-on of their principles, then the perpetrators of the crime would have eserved the blame, and their religion would have been exonerated; but n a proper view of the subject, the reverse of this will be found to be he case. The Church of Rome declares all Protestants to be heretics, nd maintains it as their duty to destroy all heretics. If these principles re right, so was the murder of the Protestants in France; but if that ansaction was at eternal variance with the laws of God and man, so kewise are the principles of their religion. This transaction, and the vowed principles of their religion, are so perfectly consistent with each ther, that both must be acquitted or condemned together.

Mr. D. asserted that the Irish massacre could not, with any propriety, e charged upon their religion. According to the statement he made, we ere to understand, that the Protestants had taken the estates which they ossessed in that country, from the Catholics, and the Catholics took that ethod of redressing or avenging their civil grievances, uninfluenced by eligious motives. Whether he could expect to be believed by any who ad read the history of his own country, it is not our purpose at present o inquire; but so far as he intended us to believe, that the Catholics, as uch, had been robbed and plundered by the Protestants, the statement as notoriously false. Ireland was an independent nation until the eign of our Henry II., who, without receiving any known provocation om that country, formed the design of subjecting it to the English rown, and made application to the Pope for permission to put his design n execution, promising an annual tribute to St. Peter from the land thus o be reduced to his obedience. Adrian, the reigning Pope, rejoiced at is application, which tended so much to the advancement of his own ower. In the year 1156, a bull, conformable to Henry's most san-uine wishes, was sent to England without delay, with a ring, the token f his investiture as sovereign of Ireland. After this encouragement, Ienry took the first opportunity of reducing that kingdom to his obe-ience, which has remained ever since as a part of the British dominions.

By various rebellions and conspiracies, many estates in that country have been forfeited to the crown. In the reign of King James they had accumulated to 500,000 acres: and with a view to promote the civilization of that country, terms were held out to as many of the English as chose to become settlers on these crown lands. But it is to be understood, that in this transaction, no estate was taken from any man because he was a Papist; nor was any estate either sold or given to any one because he was a Protestant. Some of the settlers from England were Papists, and some were Protestants; and both became occupiers on the same terms. These English settlers both procured and held their estates by the same legal right as any other of his Majesty's subjects. If it had been otherwise, the English settlers of the Catholic persuasion would have been involved in the odium of the transaction equally with their Protestant neighbours, and would have been equally objects of Irish resentment, if the massacre had not been a Popish plot. But all the English who were Papists remained unmolested; and these likewise united with the Irish Papists in murdering their Protestant neighbours and relations, for no other reason but because they were Protestants; and hence the horrible cruelties of that massacre developes the spirit of Popery. The Irish, in this slaughter of the peaceable Protestants, were encouraged and instigated by a Popish Cardinal, De Richlieu, prime minister of France. This horrible transaction will forever cover the Church of Rome with infamy and disgrace.

The Pope's bull, shewing the great pleasure he took in the Irish massacre, inserted in the fourteenth page of the pamphlet we are now defending, was declared by Mr. D. to be a forgery. All the reason he had for this, as far as we could understand, was, that he could not find it published among the Pope's bulls; and we do not take this to be an evidence against its authenticity. The Pope, or some of his supporters may have thought proper to suppress that bull, as far as it was in their power: but they have not been able to suppress the evidence of its authenticity; for this is procured from the state trials which took place in consequence of the Irish massacre, which has been proved a few days ago in a Lecture by the Rev. Mr. Newland, of Hanley, which I understand will soon be published; and to that publication I refer the reader for a full proof that the bull in question came from the Pope.

The bull in question has every internal mark of being authentic, as will be seen if compared with others issued by the same Pope, which are allowed to be genuine, and are equally shocking and disgraceful. One of these we shall present to the reader, after stating the occasion on which it was sent. The Protestants of France had the privilege of worshipping God according to their own conscience, granted them by what was called the irrevocable edict of Nantz. But the Popish party were incessant in their clamours to have them persecuted and destroyed. Cardinal Richlieu frequently instigated Louis XIII. to spill the blood of his Protestant subjects, contrary to the laws which he had solemnly ratified. After much blood had been spilt, he made peace with them, allowing them to keep up the fortifications of Rochelle, as a means of their security. But without any infringement of the law on their part the Cardinal induced the king to attack them with a powerful army

that fortress, and the greatest part of the inhabitants perished, principally by famine, during the siege. And when the king had thus spilt the blood of his subjects, contrary to the laws both of God and man, Pope Urban VIII. to congratulate him on his success, sent him the following bull:—

"Our most dear son in Christ, we send you greeting, an apostolical benediction. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: let the wicked see this and fret, and let the synagogue of Satan consume away. The most Christian king fighteth for religion: the Lord of Hosts fighteth for the king. We verily, in this mother-city of the world, triumph with holy joy: we congratulate this your Majesty's victory, the trophies whereof are erected in heaven, the glory whereof the generation that is to come shall never cease to speak of. Now, at the length, this age hath seen the tower of Rochelle, no less impregnable by the obstinacy of treachery than strength of nature, surrendered to the king and St. Peter. Neither is any so foolish, as to ascribe this glorious victory rather to happiness than to virtue. By your long siege of many months, you have taught us, that Europe oweth your French legions no less commendation for their constancy, than for their expedition. Your army, going clear away with the victory over your enemies, by slighting all dangers and enduring hardness, devoteth their life unto you, and promiseth you an absolute triumph of conquered heresy. The waters of the ocean made a noise and were troubled, fighting for the besieged rebels. They made choice of death rather than a surrender. Undermining treachery approacheth even to your Majesty's tents. Hell all opened her mouth, vomiting out troops of mischief and dangers, to the end so rich a fort might not be taken away from their impiety. The Lord stood on thy right hand: thou hast not only overcome the forces of thine enemies, but thou wert able also to put a bridle upon the ocean aiding them. Let us all give thanks to Almighty God, who hath delivered thee from the contradictions of the unbelieving people. Howbeit, sure you are not ignorant with what care the fruits of victories ought to be preserved, lest they perish. There is no doubt, but that, in a short time, all the remainder of the heretics, that have got stable room in the French vineyard, shall by you be utterly discomfited. The Church desireth that this diadem of perfect renown be put upon that helmet of Salvation, wherewith the Lord, mighty in battle, seemeth to cover the head of your Majesty. For we believe shortly, that all tumults being appeased in France, the glistening ensign of Lewis the conqueror shall shine to the captive daughter of Sion, rehearsing the French trophies, and beholding the brightness of your lightening lance. God, who performeth the desire of them that fear him, prosper our desires, and the prayers of the Catholic Church! Our Nuncio, who was an eye-witness of your princely glory in your tents, will be a faithful interpreter of our pontifical gratulation to your Majesty, on whom we most lovingly bestow our apostolical benediction. Given at Rome, at St. Mary the Greater, under the seal of the Fisher, the eight and twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord, 1628, and the sixth year of our Pontificate."

If our limits permitted, we should lay before the reader, the remarks

which Bishop Hall made upon this bull or brief of the Pope; but this we can only do in part. The Bishop says, "Hear, now, Pope Urban, that which ere long thou shalt hear with horror and confusion of face before that dreadful tribunal of Christ. These bloody blots of thine little beseem the shepherd of a Christian flock. What, is it for thee, like a grim herald, to give the summons to war? Is it for thee to excite Christian Princes, already too much gorged with blood, to the profligation and fearful slaughter of their own subjects? Sport thyself at our miseries, laugh at our tears, sing at our groans, and applaud our torments; but know, for all this there is a just avenger, that looks down from heaven upon us; whose rod we kiss, and expect his vengeance. Those whom thou brandest for heretics, thou shalt one day hear, when the Church shall embrace them for her children; Christ, for the spiritual members of his mystical body. For what, I beseech you, do we hold, which the scriptures, councils, and fathers, have not taught and published? To say the truth, all which we profess, your most approved authors have still maintained. Whence then is the quarrel? Shall I tell you? There are, indeed, certain *new* patches of opinion, which you would needs add to the ancient faith: these, we most justly reject: they are your own, and are either doubtful or impious. And must we, for this, be delivered up to fire and sword, and thunder-struck to hell by your anathemas? Is it for this, that a stall and shambles are good enough for such brutish animals? It was not wont to be heresy, that is so at this day. If it had been our happiness to have lived in the primitive times, before that Romish ascendency, Image Worship, Transubstantiation, Sacrifice of the Mass, Half Communion, &c. were known to the Christian world, heaven had been as open to us as other devout souls of that purer age. But now that we are reserved to that dotage of the world, wherein a new brood of articles are sprung up, it is death to us, forsooth, and to be expiated by no less punishment than the perpetual torments of hell fire! Consider this, how far it is from all justice, that a new faith should come dropping forth at men's pleasure, which must adjudge posterity to eternal death upon the ancient truth admitted into heaven. These new points of religion are what lay waste the most flourishing kingdoms, and turn the richest cities to dust and rubbish. Awake, therefore, ye Christian princes, and you especially, king Louis, in whose ears these wicked counsels are whispered. See how cruel tyranny seeks to impose upon your Majesty under a false pretence of piety and devotion. They are your own native subjects, whom these malicious foreigners require you to slaughter. If this people have wilfully violated any thing established by the Almighty, or lawfully commanded by thee, we crave no pardon for them. But suffer not those poor wretches to perish, for some late upstart superfluous additions of human inventions, and mere will worship. But you say, they err from the faith. From what faith? not the Christian, but the Romish. Consider that the Reformed stand in no other relation to the Papist, than the Papists do to the Reformed. And did we ever rage against the Popish faith with fire and sword? You may perhaps find some firebrand of sedition to have suffered condign punishment; but no Papist, I dare be bold to say, ever suffered loss, either of life or limb, merely for his religion."

We may now leave the reader to judge whether there be any thing improbable in the bull attributed to Pope Urban, which went to justify the Irish massacre. The uniform practice of the Church of Rome, has been to prosecute and destroy the members of the reformed Church, whenever they could do it with impunity. But Mr. D. denied that the Bishops of their community were sworn to persecute and destroy all whom they are pleased to call heretics. Whether he denied this with any colour of truth is the question. One part of the oath which the Bishops are required to take, is as follows: "Hereticos, Schismaticos, et Rebelles, eidem domino nostro vel successoribus prædictis pro posse persequar et impugnabo." The above has been given in English thus:—*Heretics, Schismatics, and Rebels, to our said Lord the Pope, and his successors aforesaid, I will to the utmost of my power, persecute and destroy.* But Mr. D. maintained that the word rendered persecute was a wrong translation, as it signified only to follow after; yet it will be seen by any one who consults the Latin dictionary, that the word persequar, signifies either to pursue, or to persecute; and which of the senses it is to bear, depends on what is connected with it in the same sentence; when the object to be attained is good, the word in question may be rendered follow or pursue; but when the object to be attained is evil, the word is properly rendered persecute; besides, as this was the only word in the passage he objected to, his objection was extremely frivolous; for it left the sense of the passage the same as he found it. For if Popish Bishops are sworn to follow and destroy Protestants, according to their power, it is for substance the same as to persecute and destroy them.—Some of the advocates for Popish claims say, the oath in question has not been taken by the Catholic Bishops in Ireland, since the year 1792. But if they have only relinguished it for the purpose of obtaining seats in Parliament, what security have we that they will not return to it again, if the English nation should be so infatuated as to suffer them to obtain their object?

Oaths, whether good or bad, are not such faithful indexes of the heart as actions are; it is by these that the Church of Rome is known, as a tree is known by its fruits. Their uniform practice has been a comment on their own maxim, that no faith is to be kept with Heretics; and no artifices or cruelty spared, which can tend to accomplish their utter extermination. And evidence of this may be seen in their conduct towards the Protestants of France. After the massacre and many bloody wars had been waged in France, for the destruction of the Reformed Church, Lewis XIV. ascended the Throne in tranquillity, after a training from his infancy by the Popish Clergy, for the part he had afterwards to act. But after the failure of so many bloody projects, the Church of Rome might be at a loss how to proceed, or their schemes might not be ripe for execution, or they might wish to throw the Protestants off their guard; hence, the king no sooner assumed the reigns of government, than he confirmed the Edict of Nantz, which gave legal security to his Protestant subjects. Yet, by the advice of Cardinal Mazarine and the Clergy about him, he formed the design of destroying the Reformed Church.—At first they were assailed from the pulpit and the press; but all attacks of this kind they were able to repel. Mr. Claude wrote a defence of the

Reformation, which all the Clergy in France could not answer; but the replied to the Protestants, by procuring an Edict which forbabe them t print. The king, in the prosecution of his design, ordered all the court of justice erected by virtue of the Edict of Nantz to be abolished; an made several laws which debarred from all liberty of abjuring the Catho lic doctrine; and restrained those Protestants who had embraced it, fro returning to their former opinions. He ordered soldiers to be quartere in the houses of the Protestants till they changed their religion. He shu up the Churches, and forbade the ministerial function to their clergy; an where the commands were not readily obeyed, he levelled them with th ground; at last he revoked the Edict of Nantz, and banished them fro the kingdom. "A thousand dreadful blows," said Mr. Saurin, "were struc at our afflicted Churches, before that which destroyed them. One whil edicts were published against those, who, foreseeing the calamities whic threatened our Churches, desired only the sad consolation of not being spectators of their ruins. Another while, against those, who, through their weakness, had denied their religion, and who, not being able to bea the remorse of their own consciences, desired to return to their forme profession. Now a college was suppressed, and then a Church shut up sometimes the printing of our books was prohibited, and sometimes those w had printed were taken away. One while we were not suffered to preac in a Church; and another while we were punished for preaching on it ruins; and at length we were forbidden to worship God in public at all Now we were banished, then we were forbidden to quit the kingdom o pain of death. Here we saw the glorious rewards of those who betraye their religion, and there we beheld those who had courage to confess i a hailing to a dungeon, a scaffold, or a galley. Here we saw our perse cutors drawing on a sledge the dead bodies of those who had expired o the rack. There we beheld a false friar tormenting a dying man, wh was terrified on the one hand, with the fear of hell if he should apostatize and on the other, with the fear of leaving his children without bread, i he should continue in his faith; yonder they were tearing children fro their parents, while their tender parents were shedding more tears for th loss of their souls, than for that of their lives."

The bloody butchers who were sent to them under the name of Dra goons invented a thousand torments to tire their patience, and to force a abjuration from them. "They cast some," says Mr. Claude, "into large fires, and took them out when they were half roasted. They hange others with ropes under their armpits, and plunged them several time into wells, till they promised to renounce their religion. They tied them like prisoners on the rack, and poured wine with a funnel into thei mouths, till, being intoxicated, they declared that they consented to turn Catholics. Some they slashed and cut with penknives, some they took by the nose with red hot tongs, and led them up and down the rooms till they promised to turn Catholics. These cruel proceedings made eigh hundred thousand persons quit the kingdom."*

Our limits prevent us from following Mr. D. through all his sophistry, subterfuges, and falsehoods; we can now only glance at a few of them.

* See Robertson on the Reformation in France

He denied the Anathema, inserted in the 17th page of the pamphlet he was wishing to refute; because that form of excommunication does not agree with that which is now used by the Church of Rome. But is it not very probable, that they will send a less offensive form of excommunication into Protestant countries at the present day, than such as were made use of between two and three hundred years ago? It has been the custom, and remains so still, for any thing we know, for the Church of Rome to curse the Protestants once a year; and whatever form they use, it is for substance the same, as they consign all the reformed churches to eternal damnation, except they turn Catholics. That form of anathema given in the pamphlet, was taken verbatim from their own ledger book, belonging to the church of Rochester, in Kent.

In reference to the celibacy of the clergy, Mr. D. objected to the translation of the passage where St. Paul speaks of having a right to lead about a sister or a wife like St. Peter, and the other apostles. He stated, that in the original there was neither the word sister nor wife. But here, if he had ever looked at the original, his memory must have failed him, for there is certainly the word sister. The word rendered wife, we admit, is woman: but this word, both in common speech, and in the scriptures, is sometimes put for wife; and it appears that this was the meaning of St. Paul, because he alludes to the case of St. Peter, who was a married man: and if he led about a woman, as Peter did, he must have been his wife: and this was far more commendable than to travel in company either with a single woman, or with another man's wife. From this passage, we learn that Peter continued to live with his wife after he became an apostle; and likewise that Peter, as an apostle, possessed no rights which were not common to Paul, and to all the rest; and these facts, traced to their obvious consequences, utterly subvert the main pillars of Popery.

In many things advanced by Mr. D. it is not easy to conceive how he could either believe himself, or expect to be believed. He said, the author of the pamphlet had charged them with disloyalty; yet every one who could read it might see that this was not the case. He declared the pamphlet was a slander on nine tenths of mankind; but in what sense he wished to be understood, is difficult to conjecture. The whole body of Christians amount to little more than two tenths of mankind; and not one half of those who profess Christianity belong to the Church of Rome. There is nothing easier than to give the name of slander to a plain statement of their crimes and corruptions; but neither he nor any other man can refute any one of the charges which that pamphlet contains. Not knowing the extent of credulity possessed by their people so well as himself, we expected he would sometimes exceed its utmost boundaries,—as when he attempted to assign the reason why their church had left out, in books of instruction for youth, the second commandment, which forbids bowing down to images. Parents, he said, at that time were so eager to have their children instructed, that they left out this part of the ten commands, that the rest might be more easily learnt. But can any rational being be persuaded that this was the reason for leaving out one of the divine commands? Their sole reason for having out that command was, because it condemns the use of images in worship.

To shew that the Church of Rome is guilty of idolatry, we pointe out some of the expressions they use in their prayers to Virgin Mar To this Mr. D. replied, that if some of the people used improper ex pressions in prayer, the Church was not accountable for it. But this not true, if their Church teaches and authorizes these expressions; an all the expressions we mentioned were taken from their authorized bool of devotion: for a proof of this, we refer the reader to "Prayers to th Virgin Mary, from the Litany of Loretto, in the book of Common Pray for the Church of Rome, London, 1812." There we find the followin address:—"We fly to thy patronage, O Holy Mother of God; d spise not our petition in our necessities, but deliver us from all danger O ever glorious and blessed Virgin." In their prayers to Virgi Mary, they say, "Holy Mother of God, Mother of our Creator, Virgi most powerful, Virgin most merciful, Virgin most faithful, Mirror of ju tice, Seat of wisdom, Cause of our joy, Mystical rose, Tower of Davi Tower of ivory, House of God, Ark of the covenant, Gate of heave Morning star, Refuge of sinners, Comfort of the afflicted, Help of Christian Queen of angels, Queen of patriarchs, Queen of prophets, Queen of apostle Queen of martyrs, Queen of all saints:" and at the end of each of the epithets they say, "Pray for us." In what is called "The Lady's Psa ter," the expressions are more blasphemous. This Psalter is made b inserting her name in the psalms of David in place of the name of Go The 31st psalm is changed thus: "In thee, O Lady, have I hoped, l me never be confounded. Receive me into thy favour, incline to n thine ear. Into thy hand, O Lady, I commend my spirit." Psalm xxi —"Bring unto our Lady, O ye sons of God, bring praise and worshi unto our Lady." Psalm lxviii.—"Let Mary arise, and let all her en mies be scattered." Psalm xcii.—"It is a good thing to give thank and confess to the Virgin, and to sing praises to her glory." Psalm cii —"Praise the Virgin Mary, O my soul, and all that is in me, prais and glorify her name." They have a prayer also to St. Anne, the Vi gin's mother, in which, among other things, they say, "O great saint, i homage of the right and power which you had of mother over you daughter, and of grandmother over her son, and of their submission an reverence which they render to thee, we pray, &c. &c." The boo which contains this prayer was approved of at Paris, in the followin words:—"We, the Doctors of Divinity, of the faculty of Paris, do ce tify that we have read and examined this book, entitled "The prerog tive of St. Anne," in which we have found nothing but what is conform able to the Roman Church: on the contrary, we have thought it worth to be published, as very useful to maintain the devotion to St. Anne. We ask then, if the Church of Rome is not accountable for thes prayers? These prayers prove that Church to be idolatrous. It is like wise to be observed, that in the scriptures there is no prayer addresse to Virgin Mary; nor was she ever prayed to by any Christian for th first three hundred years; and yet those who call themselves Catholic have the audacity to assert in the face of the world, that they have mad no change in religion.

It was asserted in the pamphlet, that all the doctrines believed by Pr testants are as old as Christianity: to this Mr. D. replied, by saying "*I deny this!*" and he had the prudence for once not to attempt an

ther proof. He endeavoured to lessen the odium brought upon them y the inquisition; to justify the measures they adopted with respect to indal's translation; and to prove that they do not oppose the reading f the scriptures: and we much regret that we have no room to reply to ese particulars; and likewise, that we are now so limited with respect *transubstantiation.*

This doctrine we shall state in their own words. The following is e declaration of the Council of Trent. "*That by consecration of he bread and wine, there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread, into the substance of the body of Christ, and a onversion of the whole substance of the wine, into the substance of is blood; which conversion the Catholic Church doth fitly and properly call Transubstantiation. And if any shall say, that in the acrament of the Eucharist, the substance of the bread and wine do emain, and shall deny the wonderful and singular conversion of he whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole ubstance of the wine into the blood of Christ, the species of the read and wine only remaining, which conversion the Catholic hurch doth fitly call Transubstantiation: let him be accursed.*" or the proof and illustration of this doctrine, Mr. Richmond devoted a hole lecture, proposing to vindicate it from all objections, and establish s truth by Scripture, reason, and the testimony of the Fathers. As e order of these subjects is immaterial, we shall first notice that feast of reason, and flow of soul," with which he entertained his dience.

The principal point in dispute, is not the presence of Christ in the sacrament, but the absence of bread and wine. It is said these elements no nger remain after consecration; but whether they are annihilated, or ly removed, does not seem to be clearly made out; perhaps it cannot e proved that any matter has ever been annihilated; but if the bread and ine are only removed, this is done so effectually, that they are ever heard of again; and considering the vast quantities so removed, it something strange where they can be so completely concealed. If e bread be changed into the body of Christ, that body must be capale of new accessions and be on the increase; and it must receive a thoumd times more bread since his death than ever it received before. If e Priest, by consecration, makes the body of Christ, it must have been made when he began his operations; to make a thing be what it was, to do nothing at all at it; and those who have the prudence to let it one do just as much. If the Priest make the body, it would be more oper for that body to worship the Priest, than for him to be the worpper. How these things are to be reconciled to reason is the question. hen darkness is required rather than the light on any subject under scussion, it is most convenient to speak of things which are least underood, and to touch as lightly as possible on such things as are on a level ith our capacity; this mode of discussion was of course adopted by Mr. ichmond. With the nature of bread and wine, and of flesh and blood, e are as well acquainted as with any thing else; but what is the nature Christ's spiritual body, has not entered into the heart of man to conceive; nsequently our opponent dwelt principally upon this subject: yet he

was not so ingenuous as the man who attempted to explain to his pupil how an idea in the mind produced a motion in the hand; and who sai at the end of his lecture, "Now I have given you all the discoveries this enlightened age on this subject, and if you know one jot of the ma ter, you know more than I do." We have often been told, that what received in the sacrament is the real body of Christ, which was born the Virgin Mary, and suffered on the cross; and might have been led suppose that it was received in the same state in which it suffered. B this Mr. R. said, "*would be shocking to think of: the flesh an blood received in the sacrament are not such as we have now, bu such as we shall have after the resurrection, which St. Paul calls spiritual body: and which can be in more places than one at th same time, which can pass through stone walls without making an visible opening, and which possess no relation to place. Such body Christ has now in heaven; and this body he gave h disciples under the appearance of bread and wine.*" If so, h must have had a spiritual body to give, and as he had a natur one, he must have had two bodies at the same time. If it be said h never had but one body, then it must have been both spiritual an natural at the same time, which is a palpable contradiction. If it h said that it was part spiritual and part natural, and the spiritual part onl given, that will not solve the difficulty, because they say his whole bod is received in the Sacrament, by every separate communicant, while it re mains whole and unreceived in heaven, which is such a manifest contradi tion, that no proper idea can be formed of it. Besides, the whole of th fabric is raised by human invention. There is not the most distant int mation that Christ either gave or had a spiritual body before his death. If the scripture had declared that Christ had given his spiritual bod in the Sacrament, it would be no proof of transubstantiation; becau the bread and wine might still remain. But Mr. R. affirmed, "*as th body of Christ was there, it was impossible for the essence of th bread and wine to be there at the same time.*" But how does th agree with the properties previously ascribed to a spiritual body? if it ha no relation to place, it may be present without displacing any thing; if can penetrate a stone wall without any change in the matter it passe through, it might be in the bread and wine without any change in the substance. The properties he ascribes to a spiritual body are wh no body can possibly possess, and if these properties do not exist, th body cannot be received in the way he contends for; and if these prope ties do exist, that body may be in the bread and wine, without remo ing any part of their essence. Therefore, whether he affirms denies the existence of these properties, he cannot possibly escape co tradiction.

By consecration, no discoverable change, it will be allowed, takes pla in the bread; the figure, colour, bulk, and weight are the same as befor it is in all respects the same to our touch, our taste, and our smell; a it affords the same nutrition. To account for this, Mr. R. says, "*o senses deceive us: we see at a distance what appears to be a roun tower, which on approaching we find to be square; we put straight stick into the water, and it appears crooked; we have th*

jaundice, and every thing appears yellow." Very true, but for all these appearances, obvious causes can be assigned; and when they come to be understood, there is no deception; and if one of our senses deceive us, the others can rectify the mistake, when proper experiments can be made. The eye might take a well drawn picture for real life, but the other senses would soon discover what it was; but in the consecrated wafer, all our senses recognize the existence of bread, after all the experiments which can be made; and if all our senses deceive us, with respect to their proper objects, we can have no certain knowledge of any thing in the world.

Thomas was required to examine the reality of our Saviour's resurrection, by the evidence of his senses, which would have been in vain, if his senses could not distinguish flesh and blood from bread and wine. To this, Mr. R. replies, "*that the two cases are different; for, with respect to the resurrection, he was required to use his senses, and we are required not to use them with respect to the sacrament.*" This, we admit, is a difference, but it is one of his own making; it has no foundation in Scripture or reason. Our Saviour certainly requested his disciples to use their senses at the Sacrament, for otherwise, they could have neither heard nor seen what he was doing, and it would have been in vain for him to say, "This do in remembrance of me." If we are not to use our senses, how do we know that the appearance of bread remains after consecration. It is admitted that all the discoverable accidents or qualities of the bread remain in the sacrament; and it is opposed to every dictate of reason, to suppose, that the accidents can remain when the substance is gone. The colour, figure, and bulk of a thing may be changed, while the substance or essence of it remains, but the accidents cannot remain when the substance is removed. Length, breadth, density, and weight cannot exist, but in company with the substance to which they belong; if they could, they would be accidents no longer, as they would exist of themselves. To say, therefore, that the accidents remain when the substance is removed, is as great a contradiction as can be put into words.

Transubstantiation destroys the nature and use of the sacrament. A sacrament is a sacred sign; but the body of Christ cannot be the sign, because it is the thing signified; and if that is the only substance remaining, there is no sacrament. The accidents of bread and wine cannot be the sign, for without the substance they can have no existence; and it is impossible to make nothing the sign of any thing. Therefore, "the Papists in destroying the bread and wine, do utterly destroy the blessed sacrament, and tear off the sacred seal from the covenant of grace, and rob the Church of the benefits of Christ's death, as signified and conveyed to them by this ordinance."

Transubstantiation is said to be a wonderful miracle: but "there are two things necessary to a miracle; that there should be a supernatural effect wrought, and that this effect be evident to sense; so that though a supernatural effect be wrought, yet if it be not evident to sense, it is to all the ends and purposes of a miracle, as if it were not; and can be no testimony or proof of any thing, because it stands in need of another miracle, to give testimony to it, and to prove that it was wrought. And nei-

ther in Scripture, nor in profane authors, is anything called a miracle, b
what falls under the notice of our senses; a miracle being nothing but
supernatural effect evident to sense, the great end and design where
is to be a sensible proof and conviction to us of something we do not se
For want of this, Transubstantiation is no miracle: a sign or miracle
always a thing sensible, otherwise it could be no sign. Now that such
change as is pretended in Transubstantiation should really be wrough
and yet there should be no sign of it, is a thing very wonderful; but n
to sense; for our senses perceive no change; and that a thing should r
main to all appearance just as it was, hath nothing of wonder in it. W
wonder indeed when we see a strange thing done, but no man wonde
when he sees nothing done."

Our Saviour partook of the sacramental bread; and if it was chang
in the manner pretended, he must have eaten his own body, which is t
most impious absurdity that could enter the mind of man. Saturn is i
deed said to have devoured his own children; but the notion of a G
eating his own body, is not equalled among all the monstrous fictions
the heathen world. If the words of consecration produce the chan
contended for, the priest makes his god before he eats him, which
more than the ancient Egyptians contended for, when they worshipp
leeks and onions. In ridicule of which, Dryden says:—

> "The Egyptian rites the Jebusites embrac'd,
> Whose gods were recommended by their taste;
> Such savoury deities must needs be good,
> As serve at once for worship and for food."

Such a practice was sufficiently ridiculous, yet they were not so besot
as to imagine they could make the gods they devoured; after all
absurd fictions there had been in the world, the most revolting of
called Transubstantiation, remained for the invention of Papists. Th
believe that a consecrated wafer contains no more than the whole of th
creator, yet they are obliged to confess, that if this wafer sho
be dried and ground to powder, every single particle would cont
the whole body and blood, the human soul and divinity of their Savio

The truth of many things which are mysterious, might be proved
miracles; but no miracles could prove the truth of Transubstantiati
because a miracle is an appeal to our senses, and we cannot be more s
sible of a miracle, than we are of the existence of bread and wine in
Lord's supper. If our senses cannot distinguish bread from flesh,
wine from blood, they cannot distinguish a miracle from a natural occ
rence. As far as Transubstantiation is admitted, it destroys the evide
of all miracles, and of all other testimony; it leaves us unable to as
tain whether there is such a book in the world as the Bible.

Mr. R. however, admitted the existence of this book; and from its c
tents attempted to prove the doctrine in question, for this purpose,
mentioned the words of our Saviour, when he took the bread and s
"*This is my body;*" and if there be any evidence of Transubstan
tion in Scripture, it is contained in this passage; and this passage conta
no such evidence, if our Saviour here made use of figurative expressi
That he did not here speak in a figurative style no shadow of a proof eit
has or can be produced. It is admitted that Christ used figurative l

guage, when he said, "I am the true vine, I am the door, I am th way;" on what ground then can it be denied, that he made use of figurative language at the institution of this sacrament. Even Roman Catholics admit that our Saviour used a figurative expression, when he said "This *Cup* is my blood;" by what rule of interpretation then, can they deny that he used a figure, when he said, "This is my body?"

There is, perhaps, nothing more common in any language, than to give to the sign, the name of the thing signified; and this is evidently the case in the Scriptures. There it is expressly said, that the three branches are three days; the seven kine, are seven years; the ten horns, are ten kings; the seven stars, are the seven angels of the churches; the rock in the wilderness, was Christ. In these cases, it is not pretended that any Transubstantiation took place; no one, for instance, supposes that Christ was changed into a rock. When the apostle says, "That rock was Christ," he meant that it represented him. So in the other cases, things are said to be what they are the signs of. This mode of speech was adopted by our saviour; as when he said, "The field *is* the world; the good seed *are* the children of the kingdom; the tares *are* the children of the wicked one; the harvest *is* the end of the world; the reapers *are* the angels: in these instances, the signs are said to be the things signified; and by the same figure of speech, when he took the bread, he said, 'This is my body;" which, according to his usual manner of speaking, was the same in effect as to say, This represents my body. These words, therefore, offered no evidence whatever of any thing like Transubstantiation. Our Saviour said, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off; and if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out;" and if a man should plead that these words are to be taken literally, he would use just such another argument, as the Romans do for Transubstantiation; only he would not use it either for so absurd or so impious a purpose.

Mr. R. insisted much on those passages in John vi. where Christ says, 'His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed." He asserted that the people understood our Saviour to be speaking literally, and if he had not intended to be so understood, he would not have suffered them to go away under such a mistake. To this it may be replied, that our Saviour acted on this as he did on many other occasions; he frequently spake in parables, and his hearers went away without comprehending his meaning; as in those cases when he afterward expounded his parables to his disciples. When he said, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up again in three days," the people mistook his meaning, by understanding him literally, and they went prejudiced against him on that account: and if, on other occasions, the perversity of the people prevented him from removing their mistakes, why might it not be the case when he said, "My flesh is meat indeed?" Besides, Mr. R. contended that Christ alluded in these words to "*his spiritual body:*" but as that had never been mentioned, it was impossible that they should have any idea of it; so that even on his principle, the people were suffered to go away under a mistake.

When Jesus knew in himself, that the people murmured at his doctrine, he said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:" that is, If you could eat my flesh it would not avail for your salvation;

and therefore it could not be a literal eating of his flesh, that was to give them eternal life. He gave his flesh for the life of the world, when he was made a sacrifice for sin; the benefits of which, we receive by faith, John iii. 16. With respect to the passage where Christ says his "flesh is meat indeed," Mr. R. was very positive that our sense of it could not be the real one; because, if it meant no more than that the sacramental bread should be the sign of his body, there was no mystery in it at which the people could have been offended. Here he was under a double mistake. In the first place, what he states is not our sense of the passage: we do not consider any thing which is said in John vi to have any reference to the sacrament, because that ordinance was not then instituted; and because it is there said, "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever;" and this cannot be truly affirmed of the sacrament. In the next place, he was mistaken when he said, there was no mystery in it, according to our explanation: for if there be no mystery in the sign, there is a great mystery in the thing signified, which has often been the ground of offence; as the apostle declares, when he says, "We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Spiritual enjoyments, both in this world and that which is to come, are frequently spoken of under the emblem of eating and drinking: in the same sense, and in reference to his sufferings, our Saviour speaks of giving us his flesh to eat. But there is nothing in the Scriptures about Transubstantiation. If such a doctrine could be found there, it would ruin the credit of its divine inspiration. Many things in Scripture are above our reason, but nothing contrary to reason can come from heaven. Many great divines among the Roman Catholics themselves, have acknowledged that Transubstantiation cannot be proved by Scripture. *

For a proof of his doctrine, Mr. R. in the last place, had recourse to the testimony of the Fathers. And in so wide a field he had room for many flourishes; a circumstance which he was careful to improve to the best advantage. It will be admitted, that many passages may be selected from the Fathers which, in an insulated state, might be taken as evidence of the doctrine in question: but it will be found on a proper examination, that either they said nothing which in reality favoured Transubstantiation, or otherwise they contradicted themselves: and therefore this doctrine can never be proved by their testimony. The Fathers do indeed use very strong language with respect to the Lord's supper, but so they do likewise with respect to baptism, in which ordinance no Transubstantiation was ever supposed to take place. The change which they declare the elements to undergo by consecration, may be understood in reference to their use, and not to their substance. When the Fathers declared the bread and wine to be the body and blood of Christ, they only used the same language which we do now; but as they were not apprehensive of the abuse which would be made of their figurative speeches, they were of course not always so careful to explain themselves as Protestants are at the present day; but whenever they did explain themselves, they appear to have had exactly the same views on the

* See Tillotson's discourse on this subject.

subject. They say, "the names of the things signified are given to the signs; that the bread and wine do still remain in their proper nature and substance, and that they are turned into the substance of our bodies; that the body of Christ in the sacrament is not his natural body, but the sign and figure of it."

Irenæus, Hilary, Nissen, Cyril, and others, as Cardinal Bellarmine himself acknowledges, expressly declare that our bodies are nourished by the Eucharist; which could not be the case if the substance of the elements did not remain after consecration. Tertullian says, "*The bread our Saviour took and distributed to his disciples he made his own body, saying, 'This is my body;' that is, the image or figure of my body.*" Theodoret says, "*The mystical signs after consecration lose not their own nature.*" Chrysostom says, "*It is a carnal thing to doubt how Christ can give us his flesh to eat, since this is mystically and spiritually to be understood.*" Origen says, "*There is in the New Testament a letter which kills him who doeth not spiritually understand those things which are said; for if we take according to the letter that which is said, 'Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood,' this letter kills.*" Austin observes, "*Our Lord did not doubt to say, 'This is my body,' when he gave the sign of his body.*" When he is commenting on these words of our Saviour, "Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, &c." he introduces our Saviour speaking to his disciples as follows: "*Ye must understand spiritually, what I have said unto you; ye are not to eat this body which you see, and to drink that blood that shall be shed by those that shall crucify me: I have commanded a certain sacrament to you, which being spiritually understood will give you life.*" In another place, he says, "*If the sacraments had not some resemblance of those things whereof they are sacraments, they would not be sacraments at all: but from this resemblance they take for the most part the names of the things which they represent.*" He likewise observes, that "*where a flagitious act seems to be commanded, there the speech is figurative; as when he saith, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, &c.' It were a horrible wickedness to eat the flesh of Christ; therefore, here must needs be a figure understood.*" *

What these Fathers say on this subject is directly opposed to Transubstantiation; and it shews that no such opinion at that time prevailed in the Church. The learned Whitaker, when disputing against this doctrine, says, "If you can bring me but one testimony of sincere antiquity, whereby it may appear that the bread is Transubstantiate in the flesh of Christ, I will yield my cause." But we wish it to be understood, that if a thousand Fathers had expressed their belief of Transubstantiation, their testimony would have been totally insufficient to prove the truth of a doctrine, so repugnant to reason, and contradictory to the Scriptures.

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* To save room, we have omitted references to the works where these passages may be found; but the reader may find these references, and much more information on the same subject, by consulting the works of Bishop Hall and Archbishop Tillotson.

It was long, before the belief of Transubstantiation was established in the Church of Rome. The sense which that Church entertained on this subject for hundreds of years was expressed by Theodoret as follows:—*"Our Saviour changed the names, and gave to his body the name of the symbol or sign, and to the symbol or sign the name of his body; thus, when he had called himself the vine, he called the symbol or sign his blood. For he would have those who partake of the divine mysteries not to attend to the nature of the things which are seen, but, by the change of names, to believe the change which is made by grace; for he who called that which is by nature a body, wheat and bread, and again likewise called himself the vine, honoured the symbols with the name of his body and blood; not changing nature, but adding grace to nature."* Facundus, who wrote in the Sixth Century, likewise expressed the sense of the Church on this subject, where he says, speaking of Christ receiving the Sacrament, *"The consecrated bread and cup is by us called his body and blood; not that the bread is properly his body and the cup his blood, but because they contain in them the mysteries of his body and his blood; hence also our Lord himself called the blessed bread and cup which he gave to his disciples his body and blood."*

Austin, whom we have mentioned before, and who lived in the 7th century, likewise spake the sense of the Romish Church, when describing the benefits we derive from Christ, he said, *"That as we receive the similitude of his death in baptism, so we may also receive the likeness of his flesh and blood; that so neither truth may be wanting in the sacrament, nor Pagans have occasion to make us ridiculous for drinking of the blood of one that was slain."*

Austin, in another place, says, that *"The sacrament is in some manner or sense Christ's body."* And the Church of Rome, in their own canon law, give the following exposition of his words, "The heavenly sacrament, *which truly represents the flesh of Christ, is called the body of Christ; but improperly: whence it is said, that after a manner, but not according to the truth of the thing, but the mystery of the thing signified; so that the meaning of the thing is, it is called the body of Christ; that is, it signifies the body of Christ."* This passage makes it evident, to a demonstration, that up to the 7th century the Church of Rome did not believe in Transubstantiation. One of their own Popes, namely Galasius, disputed with the Eutychians, who held that the body of Christ, at his ascension, was changed into the substance of his divinity; and in the refutation of this opinion, he declared there was no substantial change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ: his words are as follows; *"Surely the sacraments we receive of the body and blood of our Lord are a divine thing, so that by them we are made partakers of a divine nature: and yet it ceaseth not to be the substance or nature of bread and wine."* This Pope spoke the sentiments of their Church at that time, and he had the same views of the Sacrament, which Protestants have now; and therefore to affirm that Transubstantiation has always been believed by

the Romish Church, requires impudence almost as monstrous as the doctrine it is intended to support.

About the year 750, there was a dispute about the worship of images, and the synod of Constantinople argued against the use of images in worship as follows:—"*Our Lord having left us no other image of himself, but the sacrament, in which the substance of bread was the image of his body, we ought to make no other image of our Lord.*" But at the second Council of Nice, in 787, there was a strong party for the use of images, and then they thought proper to declare, that the sacrament is not the image, but the real body and blood of Christ; so that the corporeal presence was first brought in to support the stupid worship of images. After it was brought in it was warmly contested for about 300 years; the gross ignorance and superstition of the people prepared them to receive almost any thing which came under a pretence of mystery in religion. But this doctrine was resisted by men of piety and learning. Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mentz, opposed it with all his might. Bertram tells us, "*that they who according to their several opinions talked differently about the mystery of Christ's body and blood, were divided by no small schism.*" This doctrine was established by Pope Nicholas, 1059, in a form which was afterwards rejected, and a new form substituted by Gregory VII. in 1079: at last the absurdity attained its completion, and became so monstrous, that it will for ever cover the Church of Rome with the darkest infamy and guilt. And it was authorized as an article of faith by the Lateran Council, 1215. Scotus acknowledges that this doctrine was not always thought necessary to be believed; but that the necessity of believing it was consequent to that declaration of the Church made in the Council of Lateran, under Pope Innocent III. Tonstal admits that before the Lateran Council, men were at liberty as to the manner of Christ's presence in the sacrament. Erasmus, who likewise lived and died in the Romish Church, says, "It was late before this Church defined Transubstantiation, unknown to the ancients both name and thing."

Yet since this disgusting absurdity has been established as an article of faith, they have enforced the belief of it by burning men at a stake, and by exercising all the cruelties of the horrible Inquisition. This doctrine leads to worse than Pagan pomp and Pagan idolatry. Costerus, one of their own writers, admits "*That if by Transubstantiation the bread be not turned into the body of Christ, their worshipping the host is the greatest idolatry in the world.*" And we have proved that the doctrine is utterly false; it therefore follows that they are not only the most tyrannical, cruel, and bloody, but likewise the most dolatrous Church that ever existed.

Transubstantiation exposes Christianity to the greatest contempt and derision. Cicero, one of the wisest men in the heathen world, says "*When we call the fruits of the earth Ceres, and wine Bacchus, we use but the common language; but do you think any man so mad as to believe that which he eats to be God?*" At that time he could not be persuaded that mankind would ever fall into so extravagant a folly.—Avezzoes, an Arabian Philosopher, who wrote about the beginning of the

12th Century, called Mahometanism the religion of swine; but respec ing Christianity, which he thought more absurd, he made the followin declaration, "*I have travelled over the world, and have found diver sects; but so sottish a sect or law, I never found, as is the sect o the Christians; because with their own teeth they devour their Go whom they worship.*" Those who support the doctrine of Transubstan tiation, are in effect the greatest enemies to Christianity; and they ar led to kindle the hottest fire of persecution: for such a doctrine can onl be maintained by fire and sword. Multitudes in their own community could not be brought to acknowledge so base an absurdity, were it not fo fear of torture and death. And what a wicked state are men reduced t when they must either burn at a stake, or embrace the most impious o all "*damnable heresies?*" Popery is the curse of every nation where i is established. Thanks be to God for our happy deliverance.

FINIS.

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THE

DOCTRINE

OF THE

HOLY TRINITY:

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT

THE MANCHESTER CONFERENCE,

And published at the Request of the Hearers.

THE SECOND EDITION;

With an Appendix, containing a Reply to the Rev. George Harris.

BY ABRAHAM SCOTT.

There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. ST. JOHN.

LONDON:

Sold by R. Baynes, and T. Blanchard; by J. Clarke, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Mort, Newcastle-under-Lyne; T. Allbutt, Hanley; Sutton, Nottingham; Smart, Huddersfield; Cunningham, Ashton; Cullingworth, Leeds; Hartley, Rochdale; Walker, Halifax; Harrison, Barnsley; and J. Blackwell, Sheffield.

1824.

NOTICE TO THE READER.

THE same reasons assigned by the Author some weeks ago, for publishing a discourse on the Atonement, have now induced him to publish one on the Trinity. These subjects are so closely connected in themselves, and are discussed so far with the same views, and upon the same principles, that wherever they come, it is expected they will meet with the same friends and the same enemies: where that was repulsed, this will be spurned; aud where that was favourably entertained, this will be made equally welcome. No intelligent reader will either wish, or expect to find every thing new on such a subject. At the time this discourse was written, the most celebrated works on the Trinity were not accessible to the Author; but of such as were at hand, he has made so much use, as to render it, in his opinion, more worthy of public attention than it otherwise would have been. As this discourse was composed at the request of the friends assembling in Ebenezer Chapel, Bolton, the Author thinks himself under an obligation to dedicate it to them; and begs leave to subscribe himself their humble servant,

A. SCOTT.

Ashton-under-Lyne, June 21st, 1822.

THE

DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY,

&c. &c.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
MATT. xxviii. 20.

THE passage now read, has been selected for the purpose of delivering a discourse on the doctrine of the Trinity, three persons and one God; an article of faith needful to be understood, so far as it is revealed; being of the last importance to the Christian religion, and yet it is not often made the subject of public discussion. That there are three which bear record in heaven, and these three are one, is a sentiment we must either receive or reject; and whether it ought tot be received or rejected, can be determined by no authority but than of the Holy Scriptures. The truth of the Scriptures will be takeo for granted in the present discourse: it is sometimes requisite t, prove the truth of divine revelation; but on the present occasion we address ourselves only to such as acknowledge the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God; and when the Scriptures are acknowledged to be the Word of God, it follows that they have been written for our instruction; that whatever doctrines they teach, it is our interest to learn, and our duty to believe; for without faith, it is impossible to please God. Both our present acceptance and final salvation depend on believing the truth: Go into all the world, says our Saviour, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.

2. Among the things to be believed, is the doctrine of the Trinity, so far as the truth of it is confirmed by divine revelation. The word Trinity is not in the Scriptures, it is only used to prevent circumlocution, to enable us to express ourselves on this subject with more ease and convenience. Some people boast of expressing their sentiments in the language of Scripture; but this is no criterion of truth; the most erroneous sentiments may be expressed in the language of Scripture; witness the doctrine of transubstantiation. What is called the language of Scripture, is only the language of the translators, and from this they deviate when they affirm that in God there is one person only. Any words which express the sense of Scripture,

may be used with the same propriety as the language of Scripture; but with respect to the word Trinity, the use of it is entirely left to our own option; our obligation to believe only extends to the doctrine itself, not to any explication that either has been, or ever may be given of it; and as to the doctrine itself, we are only required to believe it so far as it is revealed in the Scriptures.

3. Here it may be proper to observe, that some persons imagine they are in no danger of being condemned for not believing, either the article in question, or any other; because, as they allege, faith is only produced by evidence, and unbelief by the want of it, and in either case it is an involuntary action, over which they have no control, and consequently for which they cannot in justice be either rewarded or punished. But here they set out from a false position, and of course arrive at a wrong conclusion; for faith, in a variety of instances, is the result of our own will and endeavours. In all moral cases, faith is a voluntary exercise. Upon every question the mind may discuss, it is a voluntary exercise to collect evidence. On all questions, arguments may be alleged on both sides; these arguments do not present themselves of course, but must be sought for, collected, and brought to bear upon the point in hand; and the mind can either resolve or refuse to collect such arguments. It is likewise a voluntary act to judge of evidence when it is collected; the evidence may be weighed in the false balances of prejudice, prepossession, partiality, or self-interest; hence different persons, in judging of the same evidence, come to different conclusions, according to their various passions, interests, and inclinations. It will therefore be found, that believing the doctrines of God's word is a voluntary act of the mind, for which we may be rewarded, or punished for the neglect of it. He that believeth not, says our Saviour, is condemned already; and whoever are condemned will likewise be punished, if they persist in the same course which brought them into condemnation. According to the appointment of heaven, we must be saved by faith, or condemned for unbelief; and as we are placed in such a state, we should sincerely and earnestly endeavour to obtain the faith of the gospel; and through the divine blessing and assistance, such endeavours will be crowned with success; we shall obtain that precious faith by which God will be glorified, and our souls will be saved.

4. The remarks now made respecting faith, apply to a belief of the Trinity in unity, three persons and one God. We say persons, because a more appropriate expression has not yet been found. The Scripture speaks of three possessed of the divine nature, to each of whom personal acts and properties are ascribed, which justifies the use of the word Persons in speaking of the Godhead. It will be acknowledged that Christ is properly called a person; and St. Paul speaks of the person of the Father; and with respect to the personality of the Holy Spirit, we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. The Greeks called them three subsistences, which is a word that might answer the same purpose, but we see no reason to give it the preference.

5. The doctrine of three persons and one God, is strenuously opposed, not only by Arians and Socinians, but likewise by Deists, Mahometans, and all the modern Jews. The opinion of the Jews on this subject is a matter of importance, because their nation was first made the repository of divine knowledge; to them were committed the oracles of God. But a denial of the Trinity is confined to the modern Jews, since they were rejected from being God's church and people. It is now no wonder that they dislike the doctrine of the Trinity, because it goes to prove that they crucified the Lord of life and glory, whom they charged with blasphemy, when he claimed divine honours, declaring himself the Son of God. Since that event, and in opposition to Christianity, they have fallen into a disbelief of the Trinity. The ancient Jews, while they enjoyed the favour of heaven, and possessed the spirit of vision and prophecy, firmly believed and maintained this doctrine; of this their writings furnish clear and decisive evidence. The form of blessing prescribed to the Jewish Priests, was the following, Jehovah bless thee and keep thee; Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee; Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace; Num. vi. 24, 26. And in a comment on this passage, one of the Jewish Rabbies informs us, that each of the three parts of this blessing was pronounced with a different accent, and with the head lifted up, and three fingers extended, to express a Trinity in the Godhead.

Moses, in his history of the creation, more than thirty times says, "God created;" and in every instance, the word God is plural, and the word rendered created is in the singular number; and the reason of joining a singular verb to a plural noun, when the name of God is mentioned, and not elsewhere, the Jewish commentators account for by saying, Jehovah, his Son, and Holy Spirit, are three degrees; these they call persons, and assert that these three are all one, and cannot be separated. Hear, O Israel, says Moses, the Lord our God is one Lord, Deut. vi. 4. Literally translated, it would be, Jehovah our Gods is one Jehovah. On this passage, one of the Jewish writers says, The Lord, and our God, and the Lord, are one. The Lord or Jehovah, he says, is the beginning of all things, and the perfection of all things, and is called the Father. The other, or our God, is the depth or fountain of sciences, and is called the Son. The other Lord is called the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from them both; therefore he says, Hear, O Israel! that is, join together the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and make him one essence, one substance; for whatever is in the one, is in the other; he hath been the whole, he is the whole, and he will be the whole. In the writings of a Jewish Rabbi, called Judah the Holy, there is the following remarkable passage; "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three in Unity, one in Trinity."

The ancient Jews made use of various symbols to express their belief, and illustrate their views of this great mystery. With what propriety this was done, it is not our purpose to inquire; our present concern is only to state their belief of this doctrine. One of those symbols was a circle, in the middle of which was the first

letter in the word Jehovah thrice repeated; this was designed to denote three persons in the Godhead, and the perfection and unity of the divine essence. Another symbol they made use of, was the first letter in the word Shaddai (the Almighty), which has three branches growing out of one stem. This letter was written on the phylacteries which they wore on their foreheads. Another symbol they used was a triangle, inscribed with the first letter of the word Jehovah, and a small circle at each of the angles. The letter with which this figure was inscribed, shewed it was an emblem of God; the three sides denoted the number of persons in the Godhead; and the equal length of those sides signified the equality of those persons; and the three circles represented their distinct and individual perfection. These instances, of which more in abundance might be given, are sufficient to prove that the ancient Jews believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, and that they founded their belief of it upon the Scriptures.

6. That the Scriptures of the Old Testament establish this doctrine, appears by the passages already noticed, and in many other places they speak of God in a manner that cannot be understood on any other supposition than that of a Trinity in Unity. Solomon says, Remember now thy Creators,* Eccles. xii. I. And when this is compared with other passages, such as, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.—Man is now become like one of us.—Let us go down and confound their language. To every mind not prepossessed with the opposite opinion, it cannot fail to impart the idea of some kind of plurality in the Godhead.†

In various parts of the Old Testament, mention is made of an extraordinary person, who sometimes appeared as a man, and acted as God, and had the name of Jehovah. Sometimes he is called the angel of Jehovah; or, as it might be more properly rendered, the angel Jehovah. This divine messenger, or angel Jehovah, appeared frequently to the Patriarchs, and was the object of their worship, and was called the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He led Israel through the wilderness; and on that occasion, the Almighty said, Beware of him, and obey his voice; for he will not pardon your iniquities, for my name is in him; Exod. xxiii. 21.

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* So it is in the original.

† When the name of God in the plural, and its connexion with a verb in the singular number, have been produced in proof of the doctrine in question, Antitrinitarians have replied, "that Moses uses the plural noun to express in a magnificent way the majesty of God, just as it is customary with earthly potentates, when publishing laws, to call themselves we or us. But there is no evidence on record that such a mode of speaking was introduced among kings at a period so early as the era of Moses; let it be observed too, that whenever this phraseology was introduced among men, the plural noun was in every grammatical tongue joined to a plural verb; whereas Moses not only puts the noun and the verb in different numbers in the verse under consideration, but afterwards represents the Almighty as saying, Let us make man in our own image; and, Behold the man is become as one of us. Such phrases as these last, were never used by a single man, and therefore cannot have been borrowed from human idioms."

Here Jehovah speaks of another person who had his name in him, and whom they were to fear and obey as God, lest he should not pardon their iniquities. Of this person it is said, that Jehovah rained fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, from Jehovah out of heaven; Gen. xix. 24. Jehovah raining fire from Jehovah out of heaven, is a form of speech that exhibits two persons at the same time bearing the ineffable name Jehovah; and there is no objection against the Trinity, which does not operate against two persons in the Godhead, as much as against three; and therefore wherever two persons are introduced in Scripture; having the mysterious name Jehovah, all these objections are as effectually overturned, as if three persons were mentioned; the same observation applies to all the passages where a second person is described as having the power and prerogatives of Deity.

Out of a great number of such passages, we shall notice one in the second Psalm; Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. The Jews would know that this was spoken of a person possessed of proper divinity, because it is added, Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are they that put their trust in him. When this passage is taken in connexion with another, where the Almighty says, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man; Blessed is the man that trusteth in Jehovah; Jer. xvii. 5, 7. It follows that the person called the Son of God, in this psalm, must be Jehovah; for otherwise it could not have been said, Blessed are all they that put their trust in him. St. Paul applies this passage to Christ, whom he describes as the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of the Father's person; who has a more excellent name than any of the angels, and who obtained that name, not by gratuitous donation, but by right of inheritance. Hence there are two persons here spoken of in the Godhead; and those who admit of two, cannot deny the possibility of three; and in other places, three are mentioned. To the question, What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he? the Jews replied, The son of David. How then, said our Saviour, does David in spirit call him Lord? saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool; Psalm cx. 1. Matt. xxii. 41---45. From our Saviour's comment on this passage, we learn, that he had a human nature, in respect of which he was David's son; and likewise a divine nature, in respect of which he was David's Lord; and that David spake this by inspiration of the Spirit; so that in this passage there is one person in the Godhead speaking of the other two. In Isaiah lxi. 1. we read, The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. In this passage three persons are introduced, the speaker, the Lord, and his Spirit. That our Saviour is to be understood by the speaker, was declared by himself, when he read this passage in the synagogue at Nazareth, and said, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. Luke xiv. 17---21.

At present, we shall only notice one passage more in the Old Testament, which is as follows; Come ye near unto me, hear ye this,

I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I; and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me. Isa. xlviii. 16. Here we have three, the Lord God, and his Spirit, and the person speaking; and if each of these persons belong to the Godhead, there must be a Trinity. That the Lord belongs to the Godhead, will not be denied; that the Spirit of God does so likewise, will hereafter be proved; and with respect to the person speaking, it is to be observed, that in the second verse he is called Jehovah, and in the twelfth and thirteenth verses, he says, I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens; when I call unto them they stand up together. From this it appears, that the person speaking is Jehovah, the Creator of the earth and the heavens; and this person says, And now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me. This passage, therefore, plainly sets forth the doctrine of the Trinity, and is inexplicable on any other supposition.

7. In the New Testament, the doctrine of the Trinity is more clearly stated, and the truth of it more fully confirmed. In speaking of the divine Being, frequent mention is made of three persons, in a way of great eminence and pointed distinction. This was the case at our Lord's baptism. When he came up out of Jordan, the Spirit of God descended like a dove and rested upon him; and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. In this transaction three divine persons are engaged. The Father speaking from heaven, the Son coming up out of Jordan, and the Holy Spirit descending and resting upon him. The same truth is inculcated and confirmed by the promise which our Saviour made to the disciple, when he said, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. John xiv. 16---17. & xv. 26. Here are three persons manifestly distinguished, and acting in various capacities; there is the Father, to whom the Son prays, and from whom the Spirit proceeds; the Son praying, the Father sending the Spirit, and testified of by the Spirit so sent; and the Spirit given by the Father, testifying of the Son, and abiding with the disciples. St. Paul speaking to the Romans concerning the resurrection, says, If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Rom. viii. 11. In this passage, there is reference to three persons; to Christ, who was raised from the dead; to the Spirit, by whose power his resurrection was accomplished; and to the Father, whose Spirit dwells in believers. To the Corinthians, the apostle says, Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. I Cor. vi. 11. That it is God the Father that justifieth and sanctifieth, will not be denied; but here the apostle declares, that these great benefits are derived from Christ and from the Holy Spirit; by which it appears, that there are three persons

by whom these divine acts are performed. In the Epistle to the Thessalonians, the apostle supplicates all the persons in the Trinity, where he says, Now God himself even our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you; and the Lord make you to abound in love one towards another. By the Lord, in this place, we are evidently to understand the Holy Spirit, not only because it is his office to make us to abound in love, but likewise because he is mentioned distinctly from the Father and the Son in the next words. To the end that he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness, before God even the Father, at the appearance of the Lord Jesus with all his saints. 1 Thes. iii. 11---13. In this place therefore there is a plain enumeration of all the persons in the Godhead. St. Peter, writing to his dispersed brethren, stiles them elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, I Pet. i. 2. Here the three persons in the Godhead are not only expressly named, but their distinct offices in the redemption of mankind are particularly specified. The Father is said to elect, the Spirit to sanctify, and the Lord Jesus to shed his blood.

The form of admission into the Christian Covenant, as prescribed by our Saviour for all mankind, is, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and of the use and design of this no rational account can be given, unless the doctrine of the Trinity be admitted. The Scripture teaches us, that we are concerned with the whole Trinity in every act of devotion. When we draw nigh to God, it is through Christ and by the assistance of the Spirit. We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; and Christ is the only way in which we can approach unto God: no man, he says, can come unto the Father but by me. But through him, a way is opened for all, whether Gentile or Jew. For through him, says the apostle, we both have access, by one Spirit, unto the Father; Eph. ii. 18. We are dismissed from worship by this apostolical benediction, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen. II Cor. xiii. 14. Thus it appears, that infinite wisdom has thought proper to inculcate upon us the notion of a Trinity, in every act of worship.

We shall pass over many other passages in proof of a Trinity, whose authenticity has never been called in question, to notice one to which objections have been made. The passage is in the first epistle of St. John, v. 7. There are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. This passage has been found in some Greek manuscripts and not in others, and on this account, Antitrinitarians affirm it is an interpolation; but such an affirmation is not to pass without sufficient proof, and with this the world has never yet been furnished. The difference of copies originated either in mistake or design; it is more charitable to suppose the former, and it is much easier to make a mistake by omission, than by an interpolation. If the difference in the copies be attributed to design, historical evidence will be found to prepon-

derate in favour of the opinion, that the passage was left out by Anti-trinitarians. For Socrates, in his Ecclesiastical History, informs us, that the Christian Church had all along complained, that the epistle of St. John had been corrupted by the first adversaries of Christ's divinity. And there are no manuscripts now remaining which were written before that period; and those written since can furnish no conclusive evidence. Those who have believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, have always had more veneration for the Scriptures than their opponents, and on this account, are not so likely to have corrupted the text; and if they had, they would have been more easily detected; because the addition of a passage is more readily noticed than the omission of one, and the design in this case would be more apparent and less excusable, as they could not plead mistake with the same probability of obtaining credit.

It may be likewise observed, that the Trinitarians had not so much temptation to corrupt the text as their opponents, because their side of the question did not stand in so much need of such an expedient. It is likewise to be remembered, that Constantine's successor in the Roman empire was a zealous Arian; he was possessed of arbitrary power, and exerted that power in defence of the new doctrine he had embraced. That period was called the Arian age, and such as maintained the doctrine of the Trinity were persecuted and banished, and the same power might banish the passage in question from all the copies which were then transcribed. We cannot suppose they were wanting in inclination to do this, if we judge by those of the present day, who have taken such unwarrantable liberties in what they call the new version of the Scriptures. This text was quoted by Tertullian, St. Cyprian, Fulgentius, and by Athanasius in his contest with Arius at the council of Nice;* which shews it was then in the original Scriptures. The passage bears the strongest marks of internal evidence; it is connected with what goes before, and with what follows after; it agrees in phraseology with the idiom of St. John, and in sense it corresponds with other passages

* "Till we descend to modern times, no objection was ever advanced against the authenticity of the verse in question. Jerome complains of the omission of it by unfaithful translators; and declares, that the best Greek manuscripts of his time contained it; for he appeals, as we have seen, in behalf of his version, to the authority of these manuscripts. Jerome died A. D. 420, and ever since his days, the verse has not only maintained its place in Scripture, but has been uniformly quoted and referred to, by writers of the first eminence for learning and integrity, in every succeeding age. If we should suppose, for a moment, that it is spurious; is it not wonderful that during the period of one thousand four hundred years, which intervened between the days of Praxeas and the age of Erasmus, not a single author can be mentioned, who ever charged this verse with being an interpolation or forgery? Had it in any of those ages been suspected to be spurious, would the Arians have been silent when it was produced against them? That the Arians in those times never pretended to deny the authenticity of the verse in question, is a phenomenon which should be accounte d for by those who contend that it is spurious."

which are allowed to be genuine: for to say there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, is the same for substance, as the command to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And with respect to the declaration that these three are one, let it be observed, that Christ says, I and my Father are one; and in whatever sense the Father and Son may be said to be one, in the same sense the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit may be said to be one. For these and many other reasons which might be assigned, we are persuaded the passage was written by St. John. The contrary never was, nor ever can be proved. *

From what has now been advanced, it appears there are three very often spoken of in Scripture, under the different appellations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and these terms imply opposite relations which can never meet in the same subject. The Father cannot be Father to himself; nor can the Son be Son to himself; nor the Holy Ghost proceed from himself, nor be his own spirit. And therefore whatever proves each of these to be possessed of proper divinity, proves a Trinity in the Godhead. That the Father is possessed of divinity, will not be denied; all that remains then is to shew that the Son and Holy Ghost are so likewise.

8. With respect to the divinity of Christ, our limits at present afford the opportunity of a few remarks only. St. John speaking on this subject, informs us, that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. St. Paul says, Great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifested in the flesh. And our Saviour is elsewhere stiled, The mighty God, the great God, and the true God. He is called Jehovah, and Lord of Hosts, the First and the Last, the Almighty. That Christ was justly entitled to these divine appellations, appears by his qualifications. He possessed all the peculiar and distinguishing attributes of Deity. He is declared in Scripture to be eternal and unchangeable, to be omnipotent, and omniscient, and omnipresent; to have in him all the fulness of the Godhead. He had a glory with the Father before the world was; and all the glory of God is seen in the face of Christ. These divine attributes are displayed by his works. In the beginning he laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands. All things were made by him, and for him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. He upholds all things by the word of his power. He is before all things, and by him all things consist. He will raise the dead, and judge the world; he will punish the wicked with everlasting destruction, and give eternal life to the righteous. These works proclaim his divine nature. The Apostle declares that God manifested himself to the heathen nations. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, he says, are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and Godhead. And if so, and the work of creation

* See this subject further discussed in the Appendix.

is properly attributed to Christ, it will follow, that his divinity is seen in the things which are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.

When Socinus undertook to prove that Christ was only a mere man, he of course denied that he was the maker of the world, and explained these passages to signify nothing more than the reformation of mankind. But this was a comment which no Christian writer before, for the space of fifteen hundred years, had ever put upon the Scriptures. But however destitute of authority or reason such comments were, they were requisite to the support of his cause; for Socinianism can only be supported by such wild fancies and vague interpretations; for a mere man cannot have been the creator of the world. That St. John did not mean reforming the world, when he declared that Christ made it, is sufficiently evident. He says, Christ was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. When it knew him not, it was made, but not reformed; and therefore making it does not signify its reformation. If those who reform the world may be said to make it, the apostles might be called the creators of the world. Christ was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But the Apostles were sent into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature. The converts made by Christ are supposed to have been about five hundred; but by one sermon of St. Peter's about three thousand were added to the Church; and such was the fame of his miracles, that people brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them, and believers were more and more added to the Lord, multitudes both men and women. Yet it is never said of St. Peter, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands. It is not said, All things were created by him, and for him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

If Christ made the world, it was his own in every state, and at every period of time; but if it was his only by reformation, it was not his before it was reformed. Which of these is the truth, let St. John determine. He says, that Christ came to his own, and his own received him not. They were his own therefore in their degenerate state, and they could be his then only by creation. Hence, when it is said that Christ created all things in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, we are to understand a real creation. Christ is therefore God over all, and blessed for ever. And when the divinity of Christ is granted, the doctrine of the Trinity cannot reasonably be denied.

9. With respect to the Holy Spirit, some have maintained, that he is a created being, the chief of all created spirits, and the head of all the angels; but among professing Christians, this notion is now exploded; and his Godhead will be acknowledged, if his real personal existence be granted. But Arians and Socinians affirm, that no real person is meant by the Holy Spirit, but only some divine attribute. What we have to prove, therefore, is his real personal

existence; and in proof of this we appeal to Scripture, to reason, and to all allowed rules of interpretation. The Holy Spirit is mentioned in the same honourable and distinct manner as the Father and the Son; for which no satisfactory reason can be assigned, except his real personality. All personal properties, attributes, and operations are ascribed to him in Scripture; and nothing is ascribed to him but what properly belongs to a person; and this cannot truly be affirmed of any other that is not acknowledged to be a person. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God; he strives with men, and is grieved and provoked at their iniquities. He is declared to have a will, wisdom, and understanding,—to be eternal, omniscient, and omnipresent. He descended upon Christ in a visible form. At the creation, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; and the same Spirit garnished the heavens. Job says, The Spirit of God hath made me; from which it appears, that our creation is not more distinctly ascribed to either the Father or the Son, than it is to the Spirit. In providence, he has the sovereign disposal of spiritual gifts;—all these things worketh that selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man as he will. He controls the course of nature, by miraculous powers, either exerted by himself, or bestowed upon others; he appoints ministers of the Gospel to their office, qualifies them for it, and directs them where to labour. The Holy Ghost said, Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. Take heed, says the apostle, to yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers. When three men came to invite Peter to Joppa, the Spirit said, Arise, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them.

In redemption, he performs the work of our regeneration; every gracious temper and disposition is the result of his operations. He is our comforter and guide; he witnesseth our acceptance, and seals us unto the day of redemption.—The same worship and adoration are to be given to the Spirit, as to the Father and the Son. We are exhorted not to grieve the Holy Spirit. A lie against the Holy Ghost was punished with death; and we read of a sin against him that shall never be forgiven. In this full and conclusive manner is the truth of the Spirit's personality confirmed in the Word of God. The supposition, that one of the divine attributes only is meant by the Holy Spirit, is inadmissable, if we are guided by any just rules of interpretation. We are to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and it would reduce this command to an absurdity, to suppose that we are to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and one of the divine attributes. This would be the case if the attribute intended could be ascertained; and it is much more so, when we cannot determine which of the attributes is intended. St. Paul prayed to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; and can we for a moment suppose, that he would pray to God the Father, and to one of his attributes? Antitrinitarians sometimes affirm, that the wisdom of God is meant by the Holy Ghost; but more frequently they assert, that the power of God is to be understood by that appellation. But

no sense could be made of the Scripture upon this supposition. It is said, for instance, that God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost, and with power; which, according to their explanation, would read, God anointed Jesus with the holy power, and with power. Now the God of peace, says the apostle, fill you with peace and joy in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost; that is, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Power. Through mighty signs and wonders, says the apostle, by the power of the Holy Spirit; that is, by the power of the Holy Power. In demonstration, he says, of the Spirit and of power; that is, in demonstration of the power and of power. Such an interpretation of Scripture cannot be allowed; because it would make the apostles to have written in such a confused manner, as no persons in their senses were ever known to have written; and when such an interpretation is rejected, it follows, that the Holy Spirit is possessed of real personality.

10. From what has been advanced it appears, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are each possessed of proper divinity; and therefore there are three persons in the Godhead. It is however equally certain, that there is only one God. And this is a truth not less important than the other, but less needful to be proved in this place, because it is fully believed, and openly acknowledged by all Christians. Christians of every denomination are Unitarians, and hence it is improper for any sect to assume this appellation as a mark of distinction; for that is to claim a title to which they have no exclusive right; and besides, it is a title that does not distinguish them from Jews, Mahometans, and Deists. The point at issue between us and the Antitrinitarians, is not whether there are more Gods than one, but whether there are three persons in one God.

11. Against the doctrine of three persons and one God, a variety of objections have been raised by Arians and Socinians; but when these objections come to be examined, they are found to lie chiefly against the explication of this doctrine, and so far they do not affect the doctrine itself. In whatever manner Athanasius or any other person may have expressed themselves, in attempting to explain this great mystery, or whatever may have been said in answer to these explications, will not settle the point in dispute one way or other; for the doctrine must stand or fall by the authority of Scripture alone. But setting all explications aside, it is objected, that the doctrine itself is mysterious and contrary to reason. That it is above our comprehension, we acknowledge; but that it is contrary to reason, we deny; for the doctrine of the Trinity is not that of three persons in one person, nor three Gods in one God; but three persons and one God; and to assert that a thing is three in one respect, and only one in another respect, involves no contradiction.* The doctrine of

* "The soul of man, though in itself one indivisible and unextended substance, is conceived as consisting of three principal faculties, the understanding, the memory, and the will. And as these three faculties are conceived to constitute one soul, so may three divine persons, partaking

the Trinity amounts to this, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are each possessed of real divinity, and yet there is only one God. This is the substance of what the Scripture declares respecting this mystery, but it does not give any explanation of it. If it had been explained, it might still have been above our comprehension, and we might have had to exclaim with David, Such knowlege is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. With respect to our belief of it, it may be observed, that there is a wide difference between believing a fact, and understanding the true nature of it.

That in the Godhead there is a Trinity in Unity, we are required to believe on the authority of divine revelation; but the manner in which three divine persons can be one God, makes no part of our faith; because it is not revealed in the Word of God, and does not come within the compass of our understandings.

To be required to believe a fact, when we cannot understand the manner of it, is not contrary to reason, and is a circumstance not peculiar to the doctrine of the Trinity, but is what belongs to almost every other article of faith. We believe, for instance, that God is infinite, eternal, and incomprehensible; but we cannot understand these properties of the divine nature. We believe that God is every where at the same time, and yet his essence is not extended. That God is omnipresent, and yet is not extended, are articles of belief in natural religion, and yet they form as incomprehensible a mystery as a Trinity in Unity. We believe that by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth; but it is only the fact, and not the manner of it, which is believed. The same observation applies to the union of the soul with the body, and to a multitude of other things belonging both to this world and to that which is to come. A person who should say that he believed in his own existence, but would not believe in what he did not understand, would assert a palpable contradiction.

And if there be things in human nature we cannot understand,

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of the same individual nature or essence, constitute one God. This is not brought forward as a proof the Trinity, of which the evidence is to be gathered wholly from the word of God; but it may serve sufficiently to rescue the doctrine from the charge of contradiction. We are aware it has often been objected, that the soul may as well be said to consist of ten or twenty faculties as of three, since the passions are equally essential to it with the understanding, the memory, and the will, and are as different from one another as these three faculties are. This, however, is probably a mistake; for the best philosophy seems to teach us, that the passions are not innate; that a man might exist through a long life a stranger to many of them; and that there are probably no two minds in which are generated all the same passions. But understanding, memory, and will, are absolutely and equally necessary to every rational being. But whatever be in this, if the human mind can be conceived to be one indivisible substance, consisting of different faculties, whether many or few, why should it be thought an impossibility for the infinite and eternal nature of God to be communicated to three persons acting different parts in the creation and government of the world, and in the great scheme of man's redemption?"

it is reasonable to suppose there are properties in the divine nature above our comprehension. We cannot by all our searching find out God to perfection. We can only know of the divine being what he has been pleased to reveal: and with regard to what is revealed, we walk by faith, and not by sight. To believe only what is proved by the evidence of our senses, or demonstrated by reason, or what lies within the reach of our own understanding, is not the faith which the gospel requires, nor will it be attended with any saving effect. The faith that is pleasing to God and profitable to the soul, is believing the testimony of God, however inscrutable to us, and without any other evidence than his own word. Hence our Saviour said to Thomas, Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. This blessedness comes upon such as exercise faith in the Trinity; for this is a faith that rests entirely on the testimony of God.

12. It has already been shewn, that the doctrine of the Trinity involves no contradiction; because a thing may be three in one respect, and only one in another respect. All therefore that can be fairly objected against it is, that it is mysterious, and above our capacity to comprehend. That it is so, we acknowledge; but this will not stagger our faith in the doctrine, till the objectors have shewn us a religious system coming from God, in which no mystery is contained. Arians and Socinians object to this mystery; but is their own system less mysterious? What they believe respecting Christ it is difficult to say, as there is such a variety of opinions among them on this subject; some of them believe in his pre-existent state, others reject this opinion. Some place his nature in a rank above the angels, and others assert he was a mere man. Some believe in his miraculous conception; others are so opposed to this opinion, that they reject the two first chapters in St. Matthew's gospel, and nearly the same of St. Luke's. Some believe Christ ascended to heaven at the commencement of his public ministry, to receive instruction, and be invested with authority; others discard this opinion. Some of them believe that Christ had a human soul, capable of existing in a state of separation from the body; but Dr. Priestley and his followers reject this notion. Some of them believe that Christ ought to be worshipped; and others refuse to worship him. "I know not what to do," said Socinus, in a letter to a friend, "with my untoward followers; they will not worship Jesus Christ. I tell them it is written, Let all the angels of God worship him. They answer, However that be, if he is not God, we dare not worship him; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Such a diversity of opposite opinions respecting Christ, shews there is much mystery either in their system or in themselves.

13. It is evident, that those who reject the Trinity, adopt a system equally mysterious; because "on their principles it follows, that a creature made the world, upholds all things, possesses all things, rules all things, and is the end of all things. That a creature is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. That he will be the judge and rewarder of the just and unjust. That he sits on the throne

of heaven, and receives the prayers of inspired men in the world, and the everlasting praises of the heavenly host in the world to come. Or otherwise, if these things are not so, that God has caused or permitted them to be written in his word. And in either case, to say the least, these things are mysteries as inexplicable as any that ever entered the thoughts of man." We are required to honour the Son, as we honour the Father. The apostles prayed to him in the same way as to the Father, without any mark of distinction. Stephen at his martyrdom prayed, saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And that we may be assured Stephen acted with propriety on that occasion, we are told he was full of the Holy Ghost. When Christ came into the world, all the angels were commanded to worship him; and he continues to be worshipped in the highest heavens. And if all these honours are given to a mere creature, in a book written by divine inspiration, it is the greatest mystery that ever was heard of. This mystery is inseparably connected with the Antitrinitarian system. And when they profess this system, and reject any other article of faith on the ground of its being a mystery, they shew that "the greatest pretenders to reason are not always the greatest masters of it;" and likewise that such as reject the mystery of godliness, fall into the mystery of iniquity; and the greatest mystery of all will be, if such can escape the damnation of hell. Before you conclude this to be an harsh expression, hear the reasons on which it is founded.

14. The doctrine of the Trinity is of vital importance to the Christian religion, and is inseparably connected with many others which must either stand or fall with it. When the Trinity is rejected, the divinity of our Saviour shares the same fate. And if Christ was only a man, he can have done no more for us in the work of redemption, than another man might have done. And if we view Christ as possessed only of human nature, we cannot honour the Son as we honour the Father. We cannot enter into those sentiments and feelings expressed by the apostle, when he said, Now I live; but not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I live is by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. We can with no propriety pray to him, as the apostles did, for his grace and direction; we cannot make him our only foundation; nor desire to depart this life for the sake of being in his presence. If we regard him as a mere man, there will appear nothing peculiar in him to attract our affections, excite our hopes, or command our veneration; and we shall not be able to enter into the spirit of that glorious assembly, where they are crying, Glory, and honour, and blessing, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And with feelings towards Christ so opposite to those of the apostles on earth, and to saints in heaven, on what ground can we expect to be saved?

A denial of the Trinity leads to a rejection of the atonement. If there is only one person in the Godhead, Christ was a mere creature; and a mere creature, in virtue of his own qualifications and actions, could make no satisfaction for the sin of the world; and all

that the Scripture says about his being a propitiation for sin; about his having redeemed us from the curse of the Law, by becoming a curse for us; about his bearing our iniquities in his body on the tree, and washing us from our sins in his own blood; must on this supposition be regarded as words without any appropriate meaning, or any that we can discover or derive any benefit from. Thus it appears, the Antitrinitarian scheme of religion cannot admit of the divinity of Christ; and without his divinity, there can be no redemption by price and satisfaction; and no other way has been revealed, by which sinners can be saved. But the great danger in this case does not arise merely from the want of an atonement, but from the rejection of it when provided. For such as deny the Lord that bought them, there remains no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation that will devour the adversaries.

Those who deny the Trinity, act consistently with their own scheme, when they give up the intercession of Christ; for if he had no divinity, he made no atonement; and in this case, he has done nothing for us, which he can plead on our behalf in heaven; and we can with no propriety perform our religious services in the name of the Lord Jesus, nor come to a throne of grace with any assurance of acceptance through him as our advocate with the Father. St. Paul describes our Saviour's intercession as a subject of the last importance, when he says, Christ has an unchangeable priesthood, and is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. But the Antrinitarian scheme of religion renders his intercession null and void. Belsham, in his answer to Wilberforce, when noticing the following passage, Christ sat down at the right hand of God, where he ever liveth to make intercession; observes, that God has no right hand, and that intercession does not signify intercession, but something unknown. By this comment, it appears how desirous they are to get rid of Christ's intercession; and to accomplish this purpose, they are willing to admit a mystery into their religion, which we are not to pry into.

A denial of the Trinity leads men to reject justification by faith, a doctrine so fully established, and so much insisted upon in the Scriptures; and unless it be true, the apostle maintains that Christ has died in vain; but the whole fabric of this doctrine is demolished by the Antitrinitarian scheme of religion. A denial of the Trinity leads men to deny the regeneration of the human heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The Scripture declares, that except we are born again of the Spirit, we cannot see the kingdom of God. That we are saved by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. That we are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. But the efficacy and necessity of the Spirit's influences, both in the conversion of a sinner, and in the subsequent life of a believer, are altogether discarded by Socinians.

A denial of the Trinity leads men to deny the inspiration of the Scriptures. Dr. Priestley says he does not consider the books

of Scripture as inspired. The writers of the Scripture, he affirms, were fallible, and we are at liberty to judge of their reasonings, as we are those of other men. He thinks he has shewn, that the apostle Paul often reasons inconclusively; and he maintains, that Christ was both fallible and peccable. Such opinions must of course lead the way to open and avowed infidelity. From these considerations, we leave you to judge what great danger there is in the Antitrinitarian scheme of religion, and what little ground there is to hope for the salvation of such as embrace it.

15. Those who reject the doctrine of the Trinity, are instigated by a desire to extol human reason. And we do not wish either to discourage or disparage the right use of reason. Divine revelation is no more intended to prevent the use of reason, than the telescope is designed to set aside the use of our eyes; at the same time it may be observed, that this instrument is intended to extend our view to those objects which the naked eye could not reach; and to those who will regard nothing beyond the reach of the naked eye, that instrument must be useless. So divine revelation is intended to extend our view to objects which the heart of man has not conceived; but it must be useless to such as will not suffer it to carry them beyond the reach of their own reason; and before the doctrine of the Trinity is sacrificed at the shrine of human reason, we would ask, What discoveries or advancement in religious knowledge have ever been made by reason, unassisted by revelation? What did reason do in religious concerns for ancient Greece or Rome? A child that has read the Bible, can give a better description of religion, than either Demosthenes or Cicero;—their reasoning powers were as good as our own; but how groveling, contracted, confused, and impure were their views of religion! Our religious superiority is not derived from reason, but revelation. After the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased him, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. The necessity of a revelation from heaven will be acknowledged by all Christians; and the necessity of a revelation shews the insufficiency of human reason in the concerns of our salvation. And when a revelation from heaven is given, reason must stoop to its authority, and submit to its decisions; otherwise we render the gift of it useless, and reject the council of God.

Let us not lean to our own understanding, nor seek to be wise above what is written, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Let it be remembered, that our salvation is not made to depend on our reason, but on our faith. It is not said in the gospel, He that reasons conclusively shall be saved, and he that reasons fallaciously shall be damned. We are saved by faith, that it might be by grace, not of works, (either of body or mind,) lest any man should boast. The divine power of a living faith casteth down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God: and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. The humble believer never sets up human reason above divine revelation; but he finds it his happiness to lie at the feet of the Redeemer, and his language is,

" Reason and conscience shall submit,
And pay their homage at thy feet:
No idol god shall hold a place
Within the temple of thy grace."

16. As the doctrine of the Trinity is fully established in the Scriptures, let us cordially embrace it, and hold fast the profession of it without wavering, and be thankful for the revelation of this great mystery; a revelation which fully answers all the doubts of a guilty mind; which quieteth the troubled breast,—is an anchor to the soul both sure and stedfast. Our redemption is completed by the effectual operation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, ever subsisting in one undivided essence. Whatever doubts might arise from any satisfaction which the most glorious creature could make, are clearly removed by the greatness and dignity of the Son of God; and how great soever the corruption of our nature is, we are assured that the Spirit of God, in whose image we were created, is able to renew a right spirit within us, to cleanse our hearts, and restore us to our original perfection, and to preserve our whole spirit, soul and body, blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is needful to remember, that right opinions alone do not constitute religion. The belief of the Trinity will not avail, without it has a proper influence on our hearts and lives. The doctrine of the Trinity helps us to understand the gospel plan of salvation; a salvation of which we must seek a present possession; praying for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the love of God the Father, and for the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. Let us, by a lively faith, acknowledge in all our ways a triune God. God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish, but have eternal life. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will he not with him freely give us all things? Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. What manner of men ought we then to be in all holy conversation and godliness? To you that believe, Christ is precious. Whom having not seen, ye love; and though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The Holy Spirit transforms us into the divine image, comforteth us in all our tribulations, assists us in all our duties, and guide us in our journey through the wilderness. Let us live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit; that we may abound in the gracious fruits and saving benefits of its operations. And let us ever love, worship, and adore the blessed Trinity, by whom our Redemption is accomplished.

" To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree,
To save a world of sinners lost,
Eternal glory be!"

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

A REPLY TO THE REV. GEORGE HARRIS.

THREE pamphlets have been written against my Sermon on the Trinity; it has been highly commended in a review, and this is the third time I have had to write in its vindication. It is to be hoped, that these seven treatises will be found sufficient for the elucidation of a single discourse. My present opponent is an author of some celebrity; but as to his religious sentiments, he is of the lowest cast of the Socinian persuasion; yet he refuses to be called a Socinian, and declares that name is given him by way of reproach. This is very strange; for he publicly avows, and even glories in those sentiments, which have long been known in the religious world by the appellation of Socinian; and therefore how he can think that name a reproach, is unaccountable. All the opposition which Socinus exhibited against the divinity of Christ and the Trinity, is embraced by Mr. Harris to the full extent. If he differs from Socinus, it is by carrying that opposition to a greater length, by a further degradation of Jesus Christ. So far, therefore, as the name is unappropriate, it is so much in his favour,—it is so much less reproachful than he deserves. If we had called him an infidel, he might object, that he does not go the whole length of open and avowed infidelity. For there are some parts of divine revelation which he is willing to admit; and if he may be allowed to put his own sense upon the words of Scripture, he is not unwilling to receive it all as a revelation from heaven, with the exception of a passage or two in the epistles, and a chapter or two in the gospels. In such an objection there would be some reason; but when we hear him object against the name of Socinian, we may pray to be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men.

2. However, we shall not dispute his right to assume any appellation he pleases; for what a man is called, is of little importance, compared with what he *is*. And what this man *is*, may be known by his works, as a tree is known by its fruits. In a former publication, he speaks of carrying "*the light of the gospel into those countries which are yet enveloped in the darkness, the gross darkness of reputed orthodoxy.*" And he trusts that our system will soon be consigned to that oblivion, "*from which it will never more emerge, to blast and blight all the kind and holy feelings of humanity.*" This shews the contempt, not to say abhorrence, with which he views and describes all denominations of Christians, except his own party; and his own party is comparatively so small, that its utter annihilation would make no

discernable blank in the religious world, if it could be seen at one view, Yet, with the exception of this small party, he represents the whole Christian world as involved in gross darkness, and so malignant and pestilential, as to blast and blight every kind and holy feeling of humanity. The reader will therefore see what sort of a man we have on our hands, and may judge whether the name of Socinian can be a reproach to him, or whether many Socinians would not rather think his name a reproach to them.

3. Mr. Harris finds much fault with the motto on my title-page. He declares it to be a forgery, though it is taken from the authorized version of the New Testanent. Since he is so minute and exact as to notice the motto, the reader may be curious to learn what he himself has selected to grace his own title-page. The following is a part of it, "*I love a man who thinks for himself, think what he will.*" But I will not engage to give the meaning of it, unless it is intended to justify all the errors and delusions which have ever been propagated, because the original propagators thought for themselves. This ingenious aphorism, which Mr. Harris has adopted, will furnish a new rule of interpretation, and throw a wonderful light on some passages of Scripture. The Jews have been blamed for thinking God such a one as themselves; but this was not what the prophets had taught them; it was the result of their own imagination; they were therefore to be commended for thinking for themselves, think what they would. When the earth was filled with violence, the Almighty complains, that every imagination of men's hearts was evil, and that continually; but all the while they were thinking for themselves; and we are now informed, that a man is to be esteemed who thinks for himself, think what he will. Some may think that they ought to do many things against Jesus of Nazareth; when they kill his disciples, they may think they do God service; but think what they will, they are to be commended because they think for themselves.

But will not this rule of interpretation go further than even Mr. Harris could wish? will it not justify Trinitarians, and cast Socinians into the shade? He will tell us, that the doctrine of the Trinity is entirely of human invention; that there is not the most distant idea of it suggested by any part of Scripture. Trinitarians are therefore entitled to the praise which belongs to a man who thinks for himself, think what he will. On the other hand, we shall be told, that the system of Socinians is so plainly and fully revealed, that they can express all their sentiments in Scripture language; consequently, any man may adopt such a system, without thinking for himself. Must not Mr. Harris then despise them in his heart, and think their very name a reproach.

5. Speaking of the three heavenly witnesses, (I John, v. 7.) I have said that it cannot be proved that St. John did not write that passage. But Mr. Harris affirms that Unitarians know it "*is a gross and notorious forgery, never written by the Apostle, and forming no part of the records of eternal life.*" Here the statements are so opposite, that one or other of us must have stated an untruth. Let men of candour and discernment judge between us. The question is

How do Unitarians know it to be a forgery? He tells us of some learned men who have declared it to be indisputably spurious. But does this prove it to be so? If an indictment for forgery be laid before twelve jurymen, who cannot agree about the verdict; one of them believing the evidence sufficient to support the charge, while the other eleven are of an opposite opinion; should we be justified in saying the crime was proved? But upon no better ground than this, Mr. Harris has the audacity to declare, that "*every man of learning and inquiry knows the passage in question to be a gross and notorious forgery.*" But the fact is so opposite to this false and impudent assertion, that among all the men of learning and inquiry throughout the whole Christian world, for every one who believes it to be a forgery, there are more than ten who do not believe so. Of all the authorities which might be produced, I have not room to insert the names; a few only must now be mentioned. Are not the conductors of the British Review men of learning and inquiry? But they are so far from believing the passage to be a forgery, that they severely reprobate Socinian writers who speak of it as if it was proved to be such. Doddridge was a man of learning and inquiry, but was not convinced that the passage is a forgery. He says, the words contain an important truth, but the disputes about the authenticity he will not pretend to determine. Macknight urges several considerations in favour of the authenticity of the passage; among the rest, the following. "This verse, properly interpreted, instead of disturbing the sense of the verses with which it is joined, rather renders it more connected and complete. These arguments appeared to Mill of such weight, that, after balancing them against the opposite arguments, he gave it as his decided opinion, that in whatever manner this verse disappeared, it was undoubtedly in St. John's autograph, and in some of the copies which were transcribed from it." Guyse, in his Practical Expositor, argues directly for the text; observing, among other things, that "it is much more likely that some transcriber might, through the similitude of the beginning of the seventh and eighth verses, carelessly slip over the seventh, than that any should be so daring as designedly to add it to the text." Scott, in his commentary, observes, "it is more likely that the Antitrinitarians should silently omit, in their copies, a testimony which was so decisive against them, or that it should be left out by mistake of some ancient transcriber; than that the Trinitarians should directly forge and insert it."

The following is an abridgment of what Mr. Wesley says on the subject. "But here arises a question, Is that text genuine? Many have doubted this; and in particular that great light of the Christian church, Bengelius, the most pious, the most judicious, and the most laborious of all the modern commentators on the New Testament. For some time he stood in doubt of its authenticity, because it is wanting in many of the ancient copies. But his doubts were removed by three considerations; 1. It is found in copies of the greatest authority. 2. It is cited by ancient writers, from the time of St. John, to that of Constantine. 3. We may easily account for its being after

that time wanting in many copies, when we remember that Constantine's successor was a zealous Arian, who used every mean to spread Arianism throughout the empire; in particular, the erasing the text out of as many copies as fell into his hands." Watson, in his Theological Institutes, says, "The recent inquiry into the genuineness of this text shews, that the point is far from being critically settled against the passage as a true portion of Holy Writ; and the argument from the context is altogether in favour of those who advocate it. The hiatus in the sense never having been satisfactorily supplied by those who reject it. This is of more weight in arguments of this kind, than is often allowed."

Dr. Coke, in his Preface to the First Epistle of John, says, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. The Antitrinitarian heretic trembles at this passage; it is a thunderstroke to him, therefore he leaves no means untried to avoid it. The chief mode has been to deny that this text was written by St. John, under pretence that it does not appear in all the ancient manuscripts, and that some of the Fathers, who wrote against the Arian heresy, did not avail themselve of it in proof of Christ's divinity. But a cause must be very desperate, which can allege no better reasons against the evidence of a text of Scripture. This passage is found in books of the most venerable ecclesiastical antiquity, much older than those manuscripts which do not contain the passage. St. Jerome found it in the Greek manuscript of the New Testament, from which he made his Latin version, in which we find it also, and a long comment upon it in his preface to the canonical epistles. We find it cited in proof of a Trinity, in the confession of faith, presented about the end of the fifth century, by the Bishops of the African churches, to Huneric, king of the Vandals, an Arian, and a great persecutor of the defenders of the Trinity. Now would it not have been a most unexampled piece of imprudence in those bishops, to expose themselves to the rage of Huneric, and of all the Arian party, by alleging this passage of St. John, if it had not been extant in the manuscripts of that day? Doubtless the Arians would have triumphed in such a discovery. It is clear that nothing but the truth and notoriety of the fact could have silenced those heretics. St. Cyprian, who flourished little more than one hundred years after St. John, has quoted it in his treatise on the Unity of the Church. To go no further back, we find Tertullian mentioning it in his dispute with Praxeas. Now since nothing reasonable can be objected against a passage by such writers, one of whom is Tertullian, who flourished towards the conclusion of the same century in which St. John died, it is a certain proof that these words were extant in the first manuscripts."

Bishop Bull, when he is writing on another subject, incidently mentions the passage in question. Having quoted St. Cyprian, he says, "By the way, you may here take notice that Cyprian has his eye upon the first epistle of St. John, ch. 5. ver. 7. And these three are one. He also professedly cites the place; Concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost it is written, These three are one.

Tertullian says, Which three are one thing, not one person. This I note against those who suspect that the Catholics inserted these words into the text since the Arian controversy."

Dr. Grabe says, "I believe St. John in the original wrote those words about the witnesses in heaven. The controverted place contains nothing but what he taught in the gospel, or rather mentioned as taught by Christ. He names three that bear witness of Christ; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. Concerning the first and second witnesses, St. John has recorded the following saying of our Lord's; I am one, who bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. Of the third witness, the Holy Spirit, our Saviour saith, He shall bear witness of me. Now that these three are one, the beloved disciple had in like manner learnt from the mouth of his Lord, saying, I and the Father are one. Hence it is manifest, that not only the sense, but the words are found in St. John's gospel. I can by no means persuade myself, that St. John, professedly writing of those that bear witness to Christ, named the three earthly witnesses, but passed over in silence the three heavenly ones, to whose testimony he well knew our Lord appealed in the following words, If ye receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; and this is the witness of God, which he hath witnessed concerning his Son. Now if the controverted place be taken out of the text, there is no preceding testimony of God the Father to urge in the verse just recited. Those words *in earth* would be superfluous, unless there was a precedent or consequent mention of other witnesses in heaven. Almost the only thing which is objected against this saying of the apostle is the scarcity of copies in which it is now found. It was not in the copy of the Syriac version, and many others used by the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centureis, as we may gather from their never citing it against those who denied the deity of the Son, or Holy Spirit. Nor is it now in the Alexandrian manuscript, and other books of very good note; and in those where it is read, it is placed generally in another order. But I answer, that all these three things do not prove that these words of the three witnesses in heaven were not written by St. John, but only, that not long after, they were omitted by some hasty negligent scribe. Now there appears the same reason of this omission, as of almost all we meet with, in either sacred or profane writers, namely the repetition of the same words, (there are three that bear witness,) and (are one.)" The Dr. then proceeds to shew, that similar omissions have occurred from the same cause, in several other passages of Scripture, and then adds, "Why might not the same thing have happened in the controverted place of St. John? Neither do instances of defects in the copies of divine writ detract from God's providence in preserving it. It is sufficient that there are books or copies by which we can supply the defects."

Jones, on the Trinity, speaks of this passage as follows; "There has been much disputing about the authenticity of this text. I firmly believe it to be genuine, for the following reasons: 1. St. Jerome, who had a better opportunity of examining the true merits of the

cause, than we can possibly have at this distance of time, tells us plainly, that he found out how it had been adulterated, mistranslated, and omitted, on purpose to elude the truth. 2. The divines of Louvain having compared many Latin copies, found this text wanting but in five of them; and R. Stephens found it retained in nine out of sixteen ancient manuscripts which he used. 3. It is certainly quoted by St. Cyprian who wrote before the Council of Nice, and also by Tertullian. Dr. S. Clarke therefore is not to be believed, when he tells us, it was never quoted by any of the Latins before St. Jerome. 4. The sense is not perfect without it; there being a contrast of three witnesses in heaven and three upon earth; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, whose testimony is called the witness of God; and the Spirit, the water, and the blood, which is called the witness of men. He that desires to see this text further vindicated from the malice of Socinus, may consult Pool's Synopsis, and Dr. Hammond, and Dr. Delany's volume of Sermons."

Horn, in his work on the Trinity, says, that this passage is found "in several ancient versions. It is likewise quoted by many early Fathers of the Christian church; and for the silence of those who have omitted to cite it, very satisfactory reasons have been given, which the limits necessarily assigned to this discourse do not allow to be stated. It is moreover worthy of remark, that the Fathers who have quoted this text, were never charged with interpolating it, by the false teachers of their time, who opposed the doctrines embraced by the Catholic church, and whose silence in this respect is a strong testimony in favour of the genuineness of the disputed clause. Further, this clause is found in the confession of faith of the Greek church, as well as in the ancient liturgies of the Greek and Latin churches; and when the lasting and hitherto irreconcilable schism which has prevailed between those churches, ever since the fourth century, is considered, this fact forms a strong and conclusive argument in favour of its genuineness; for such is the enmity between these two communions, that we may rest assured the Greek church would never have adopted the clause merely on the authority of the Latin, if she had not had sufficient vouchers or testimonies for it in her own original Greek manuscripts The grammatical structure of the original Greek also requires the necessary insertion of the whole of the seventh verse, and consequently that it should be received as genuine; otherwise, the latter part of the eighth verse (the authenticity of which was never questioned, as indeed it cannot be, being found in every known manuscript that is extant) must likewise be rejected; and lastly, the connexion of this disputed clause requires its insertion, in as much as the sense is not perfect without it. We have therefore every reasonable evidence to convince us that the disputed clause is a genuine part of God's word. For a full investigation of the critical evidence for and against the clause in question, (the results of which only are given in the body of the discourses,) the reader is referred to Dr. Hale's Faith in the Holy Trinity, vol. ii. pp. 133—226, in which the evidence is both clearly and satisfactorily stated, and the controversy set at rest for the future."

6. In what light then are we to view Mr. Harris? who, in the face of the fullest evidence to the contrary, has such a total disregard to truth and decency, as to assert, that "every man of learning and inquiry knows that the celebrated text, I John, v. 7. is a gross and notorious forgery, never written by the apostle, and forming no part of the records of eternal life." He proceeds to assert, that the passage cannot be found in any Greek MS. earlier than the fifteenth century. But one of these manuscripts is the Codex Mountfortii, the date of which cannot be ascertained; some of the learned who have examined it suppose it to have been written in the thirteenth and others in the eleventh century. This may serve to shew that there is no dependance to be placed on any of his own statements.

The passage is wanting in one hundred and twelve manuscripts. But they are all of too late a date to decide against the authenticity of this passage. Jerome's Latin translation, made about the fourth century, which contains the passage, was received as the authorized version of the Church, and for more than a thousand years, no objection was made against the authenticity of the passage; though the enemies of the doctrine it supports were numerous, powerful, learned, and extremely zealous in their own cause. The passage not only stood in the authorized version of the Scriptures, but likewise in liturgies and confessions of faith, and in a defence of the Trinity, presented to the most powerful and malicious adversaries of that doctrine. But though these adversaries most furiously opposed the doctrine it was brought to support, yet they never objected to the authenticity of the passage. I therefore ask any man of candour and reflection, whether such a thing could possibly have happened, if the passage had not been found in the Greek manuscripts then extant. After the division between the Greek and Latin churches took place, their enmity to each other is sufficiently known; they excommunicated one another, and endeavoured by all means to subvert each other's authority. Can it then be supposed, that the Greek church would have admitted the passage on the authority of the Latin version, if it had not been found in their own Greek manuscripts? All the Greek manuscripts now extant, in which the passage is wanting, having been written since the authorized version in which it is contained, are consequently insufficient to invalidate its authority. As every Greek manuscript written since the English version of the Bible cannot be used for the correction of any passage it contains. If any man in power had been base enough to forge the passage, we may presume they would have taken better care to have it transcribed into subsequent copies. But it might have been left out by the negligence of an early transcriber, and his copy followed by others, who did not detect the omission. That there has been some negligence in transcribers is evident, because it is not always found in the Latin version, nor always expressed in the same manner when it is inserted. At the reformation, they were extremely careful to admit nothing into the text of Scripture, without a full conviction of its authenticity; the natural consequence of this would be, that they would reject something at first, which they would after-

wards see sufficient reason to admit. Luther left this passage out of his Bible; but his followers, notwithstanding the veneration in which they held his memory, were soon convinced of his error in this particular, and restored the passage. Erasmus, following such copies as he had an opportunity of consulting, left it out of the first and second editions of his Greek Testament; but after further search, and more mature deliberation, he was convinced that the passage was written by St. John, and inserted it in the third edition. Calvin thought proper to leave out the passage; but the college, over which he presided, from a conviction that it was genuine, restored it; hence, in the version of his successor, Beza, we find it in its place, and expressed as follows: Nam tres sunt qui testificantur in cœlo, Pater, Sermo, et Spiritus Sanctus: et hi tres unum sunt. Diodati, the successor of Beza, in his annotation on the Bible, comments upon it without ever suggesting that there was any ground to suspect its authenticity. His words are as follows: "(There are three that bear witness) of the same truth by glorious effects, proper to each of the three persons of the Holy Trinity. (These three are one) namely, in essence, and most perfect union of operation." The passage was left out of some of the earlier English Bibles. After further investigation, it was admitted, but marked as doubtful, and after all reasonable doubts were removed, it was restored by the present authorized version, as a part of Holy Writ whose authenticity is fully established. It is now founded upon a rock, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.

7. In the notice which Mr. Harris has taken of my sermon, he has passed over all the arguments by which I have defended it against another Socinian, in two subsequent publications. This was, no doubt, the easiest course he could have taken; and what is fair and honourable in a disputant, he does not appear to regard. When I mention the defence of my sermon, I should wish it to be understood, that it is not the sermon I am anxious to vindicate, but the doctrine it contains, the Divine Trinity in Unity; and it is against this doctrine that my opponents have shot all their poisoned arrows. This doctrine is of the last importance to the Christian world. If this doctrine is not true, Christ was no more than a creature, and all who worship him are guilty of Idolatry; our faith in him as the living and true God is a vain delusion, and our hopes of heaven through his merits are built upon the sand. If this doctrine be taken away, it will be a question whether any thing will be left in revealed religion worth defending; but certainly nothing defensible will remain; for the writers of Scripture will be found to have spoken so erroneously, that we can place no dependance on their inspiration; and if they were not inspired, we have no revealed religion. In pleading, therefore, for the doctrine of the Trinity, we are pleading for the whole revelation which God has been pleased to make to mankind.

On Socinian principles, what regard or esteem can we have for Christ? The Sripture declares he is precious to believers. The Apostle describes Christians as those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. St. Peter says, Whom having not seen ye love, and though

now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. They love Christ because he has first loved them: hence their language is, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. St. John tells us that the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy, &c. for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. It is evident that Christ requires us to love him, for he says, If any man love father or mother, wife or children, houses or land more than me, he is not worthy of me. If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings. This love is so powerful in the heart of a Christian, that the Apostle says, What shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or persecution, or famine, or peril, or sword? nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that has loved us. This love to Christ is so essential to the Christian character, that the Apostle says, If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha. But on this subject, Socinianism is as opposite to the Gospel as darkness is to light. It destroys our most powerful motives to the love of the Saviour; and when its advocates write in the true spirit of their system, they are not ashamed to avow, that it is neither needful nor possible for us to love the Lord Jesus Christ. Mr. Belsham says, "Our Lord has so explicitly and repeatedly declared, that all the love which he requires of his disciples is, to obey the precepts of the gospel; that it seems surprising, that personal love to Christ should be so often represented and insisted upon as a Christian duty of the highest importance. It is impossible that Christians who have had no personal intercourse with him, and who have received no personal benefits from him, can love him in the same sense in which the apostles and his other companions did. They may indeed figure to their imaginations an ideal person, they may ascribe to this person the most amiable attributes, they may fancy they are under greater obligations to him than to the Father himself; in the warmth of their imaginations, they may conceive themselves as holding converse with him, and affection may be drawn out of this ideal benefactor to a very great extent; their faith, and hope, and love, and joy may swell even to ecstacy; but this is not love to Christ; it is nothing but a fond and groundless affection to a mere phantom of the imagination." It may here be observed, that what Mr. Belsham says our Lord explicitly and repeatedly declared, is no where declared in Scripture, in any manner whatever. But his statement is perfectly consistent with Socinianism, which leaves Christ no station to fill, nor any part to act in the Christian system, except that of an "*ideal benefactor*," and "*a mere phantom of the imagination.*" But we have not inserted this quotation with a design to refute any part of it; but only to shew how opposite Socinianism is to real Christianity, that whether men may make choice of one or the other, they may not be under so gross a delusion as to suppose, that they can have both at the same time.

Mr. Harris wishes it to be believed, that they make more account of Jesus Christ than they do of other men, but is at some loss to tell why or wherefore. He says, "My opponents deem themselves most triumphant over Unitarians, when by inserting the names of Gabriel, Paul, and Peter, into passages applied to Christ, they shew it would be absurd to apply them to these men, and therefore conclude that Jesus is God. Their boasted argument proceeds on a misrepresentation of Unitarian sentiments. As to his nature, we believe Jesus to have been simply a man like Paul and Peter. But we do not rest here. We regard Jesus Christ as the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; whereas we look on Peter and Paul as having received of his fulness. We assert with the Scriptures, that Jesus Christ possessed the Spirit without measure; but that to the apostles it was only given in measure. Jesus Christ was the messenger of the Father's love, the Son of the living God; but Peter and Paul were his messengers and ambassadors. Christ was the Mediator between God and man, they were his disciples; and those who cannot discern a great, an immense difference between the parties, are impervious to reason, and incapable of judgment."

A difference we acknowledge may be perceived in the expressions here emplayed, but when these expressions have passed through the Socinian sieve, every distinguishing excellence of the Saviour will be taken away. It is here stated that Unitarians regard Jesus Christ as the only begotten of the Father, the Son of the living God, as a proof that they make an immense difference between Christ and his Apostles. But when Mr. Fox pleads such titles as proofs of our Saviour's divinity, Mr. Harris replies, "The title, Son of God, is given to various others, indeed to all believers; this argument therefore is totally destroyed." If this argument be totally destroyed, how can Unitarians, by calling him the Son of the living God, discover that they make an immense difference between Christ and St. Paul? We are told that they acknowledge that Christ had the Spirit without measure. But if he was simply a man, as they state, he could not contain immensity; a finite capacity cannot receive what is infinite. It is the privilege of all believers to be filled with the fulness of God; but they cannot possess that fulness without measure, nor could Christ, if he was no more than a man. As another proof that they make an immense difference between Christ and his apostles, we are told, that they regard Christ as "the messenger of the Father's love; but Peter and Paul were his messengers and ambassadors." And when the apostles are called ambassadors, St. Paul says, All things are of God, who hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God. And if such was the design of the commission which they received from God, they must also have been the messengers of the Father's love. We must therefore acknowledge that we are so impervious to reason and so incapable of judgment, as not to see in what is here stated, an immense difference between the parties. But we are further told, that they regard Christ is the Mediator between God and man. But we can make nothing

of this, till they inform us what they mean by his Mediatorial office; for we cannot conceive how a mere man can have any merit of his own to plead in our behalf. Both Moses and Christ are called Mediators, and if they were alike by nature, we cannot see how the exercise of the same office can make an immense difference between them. If we are to believe Socinians, we know nothing about what Christ either is, or what he is doing since he left the world. Mr. Belsham, in his Calm Inquiry, page 325, declares, that "The Scriptures have left us totally in the dark with regard to the present condition, employment, and attributes of Christ: therefore it is in vain to speculate on the subject." In a few pages after, he tells us "Christ is a figurative lawgiver; he is a figurative priest, because he sacrificed his life in the cause of truth; he is a figurative conqueror, and a figurative king; and in like manner, he is figuratively a judge." What then can we make of such a Mediator, of whose employment and attributes the Scripture has left us entirely in the dark? What have we to do with this "*ideal benefactor*," this "*mere phantom of the imagination*"? Whatever expression Unitarians use respecting the dignity of Christ, they must be allowed the common privilege of explaining themselves, and when they come to do that, we shall find no discernable difference in their account of Christ and other holy men of old. According to their principles, the annihilation of Christ would be no disadvantage to Christians. A denial of the Trinity naturally leads to such a dreadful conclusion.

8. But how does Mr. Harris attempt to disprove the doctrine of the Trinity? As a specimen of his reasoning powers and critical skill, take the following. "There is a very remarkable prediction," he says, "on this subject, in Zech. xiv. 9. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth, in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one. This passage is conclusive in my mind against the doctrine of the Trinity. If truth ever fell from the lips of man, it may well be supposed to be at the time when, under the immediate inspiration of the God of all, the prophets were directed to foretel future events. In the passage which I have now quoted, the prophet declares, that a time is coming, when Jehovah shall be king over the earth, in that day there shall be one Jehovah. Were the passage to stop here, some excuse might be offered for the orthodox attemping to prove, that though Jehovah be called one, he is nevertheless Father, Son, and Holy Ghost at the same time. But the latter clause of the passage leaves them not even a speck on which to place the sole of their foot; for the prophet expressly and solemnly declares, not only that in that day he shall be one, but that his name shall also be one. How then can it possibly be three? This text then gives the seal of heaven to the primary doctrine of Unitarian Christianity. That God is one in one person, is absolutely irreconcileable with Trinitarianism." Against so formidable a battery we should make our approaches with some caution; like the worst place we have ever heard of, this passage contains much heat without any light. Some parts especially are involved in great darkness. What, for instance, can be intended by the following remark, "If ever truth fell from

the lips of man, it may well be supposed to be at the time when, under the immediate inspiration of the God of all." Is not all Scripture by inspiration of God? If so, it is all equally true; if it is not so, how are we to distinguish between the inspired and uninspired parts? Are we only to take those for inspired which appear to favour our own side of the question? How does he make it out that the latter clause of the verse is so much more formidable than the former? "One Jehovah," he says, if the passage had ended here "some excuse might be offered for the orthodox attempting to prove that though Jehovah be called one, he is nevertheless Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, at the same time." And if the thing itself will admit of such an explanation, so likewise will the name of it. If one Jehovah can be Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, he may likewise be so though he is called one. The Unity of God is not more strongly expressed in the latter clause than in the former. The truth is, the latter clause has no reference whatever to the divine Unity. Mr. Harris has totally mistaken the sense of the passage; the meaning is not that Jehovah shall be called one, but that he shall have one name; whatever that name is, when he is known by it among all nations, whether it is singular or plural, there will be one Lord, and his name one. If our translators had been guided by the arrangement of words in the original, they would have rendered this passage, Lord one, which would not make sense in English; they therefore transposed the words to one Lord; and for the want of such a transposition in the next clause, our author has made such a mistake, as we could scarcely have thought possible for any intelligent reader to make. And all he advances on the subject has no other foundation than his own egregious mistake.

When men lost the proper knowledge of the Divine Being, they gave him names which corresponded with their own erroneous ideas; but when the true knowledge of God shall be universally diffused, Idolatry will cease, the moral government of God will be established, and all nations will know and own him by his proper name. There will be one Lord who will have one name among all people. The heavenly host will then proclaim, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. Our author concludes this paragraph with as much wisdom as he has discovered in any other part of it, "The doctrine of the Trinity," he says, "is by the Almighty in this text unnoticed and unknown, and therefore cannot be true." If the doctrine be unnoticed and unknown in this text, it cannot here be refuted. And its being unnoticed in one passage surely does not prove that it is not noticed in many others. Many other doctrines are not noticed in this passage, which are nevertheless admitted to be true.

In the next place, he brings forward what he calls an overwhelming mass of evidence against the Trinity. "In the New Testament," he says, "I read at least seventeen passages in which the Father is stiled the one or only God; three hundred in which the Father is denominated God by way of eminence and supremacy; one hundred and five in which the Father is called God with peculiar high titles

and attributes &c. Here is a great mass of evidence to be sure, but the whole of it happens to be inapplicable to the point in dispute. If one passage could be found in which the Father was called the true God in opposition to the Son, or exclusive of him, it would furnish some evidence on the point in hand; but this is not the case in all the passages in which the Father is called God, with peculiar high titles and attributes. Christ is called the only true God; but that is not exclusive of the Father: and when the Father has this title, it is not exclusive of the Son. But Mr. Harris tells us of "several hundreds more, in which the inferiority of Jesus Christ to his God and father is either unequivocally expressed or clearly implied." To this we reply, that unless Christ's inferiority was spoken of, he could never be spoken of at all in reference to his human nature. But he had a divine nature also, or David's son could not have been David's Lord. He could not otherwise have been God in the beginning with God. He could not have been the Great God, the True God, and Eternal Life; and a thousand other texts might be quoted, in which his divinity is either unequivocally expressed or clearly implied. And if we were to bring forward all those texts, which declare him to have made the world, and to be possessed of every divine perfection, it would not be in opposition to those passages which our opponents produce, but in such a manner as to harmonize with them. So that all our author's "overwhelming mass of evidence" turns out to be no evidence at all on the point in dispute. In disputing with Socinians, we expect to be overwhelmed by a great mass of evidence, totally foreign to the point in hand.

9. That part of my sermon which has reference to the belief of the ancient Jews in the doctrine of the Trinity, Mr. Harris has quoted at length, so as to fill nealy three of his pages. One can scarcely think he would have given himself so much trouble, if he had not thought himself capable of refuting some part of it at least. But if such was his opinion, he has shewn himself to have been mistaken, for he has not refuted a single sentence of it. His friends however must be convinced that he has done what he could; he has exerted himself to the utmost; and the attempts he has made to overturn it we shall proceed to notice, as far as our prescribed limits will permit.

He maintains, that the ancient Jews did not believe in the Trinity. "Let me adorn," he says, "my pages with the Jewish confession of of faith, the faith of the modern Jews,—but agreeing most faithfully with the belief of the ancient people of God. The descendants of Abraham occupy the station which they have for ages so honourably filled, the defence of the unity of their God; and that sublime and all ennobling doctrine they will, I trust, continue to defend against heathen Idolaters on the one hand, and Trinitarian worshippers on the other." The reader will here plainly enough perceive, that the Jews in all ages are declared to have been in opposition to Trinitarians; but of all this, not a shadow of proof is furnished; and few men are better able to manage a dispute than Mr. Harris, so long as all proof and argument can be dispensed with. The Jews

are not only said to defend the unity of God, but to do it against Trinitarians. But as Trinitarians maintain the unity of God as well as the Jews, the only way in which they can defend that doctrine against them is by excluding Jesus Christ from the Godhead. That they do defend it in this manner, we acknowledge. So they did when they said, For a good work we stone thee not, but because thou being a man makest thyself God. For this, which they called blasphemy, they put him to death, and to this day they continue to oppose all his claims to divinity. In this way only can they defend the unity of God against Trinitarians. And in this honourable cause Mr. Harris trusts, they will continue against heathen Idolaters, and Trinitarian worshippers.

In ascertaining the opinion of the ancient Jews on the Trinity, Mr. Harris objects to my method of having recourse to their own writings on the subject. "That the Hebrew legislator," he says, "and his fellow-countrymen believed in the Trinity, must be proved from the Old Testament." Alluding to works published by the Jews, he says, "At any rate, such writings can never be worthy of a comparison with the records of the Old Testament. Had Unitarian Christians brought such evidence forward, how fierce would have been the outcry. But our reverence for the Bible is too great and too sincere, to allow us to make such an experiment. Let Mr. Scott and his friends delight, if so it please them, in the Targums and the Talmuds, the Mishna and the Cabbala; we desire not a participation in such pleasures; our delight is in the law of the Lord." If there could be any new thing under the sun, I should suppose this was the first time that any man, with a well grounded claim to be ranked among rational creatures, ever denied that men's own writings furnished the best proof of their religious opinions. The Bible may tell us indeed what people ought to believe, but not what they actually do believe; unless all who receive the Bible believe the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, In the Bible, we find the revelation which God has made of his Son; but if we wish to know what men think of Christ, after the revelation has been given, we must have recourse to their comments on Scripture, their creeds and systems of divinity. Can any man suppose it possible to find out the opinions of all the various sects of Christians by searching the Scriptures?

And if the only way of finding out what tenets they hold is by having recourse to their own writing, must it not be the same with respect to the Jews? Can Mr. Harris discover what Trinitarians believe by searching the Scriptures? or can we ascertain what Socinians believe, without looking into their writings? Without this, how could we know, that they have such sincere reverence for the Scriptures? Let us hear a few sentences from Mr. Belsham. "Trypho the Jew reproaches Christians for their belief in the miraculous conception of Christ." But it is his own opinion which we want, and which he gives as follows. "Jesus was born two years after the death of Herod, a fact which completely falsifies the whole narrative. In the gospel of John, our Lord uses metaphors of the most obscure and offensive

kind. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews indulges himself in an ingenious, but forced and fanciful analogy. Rev. v. 11. the words where Christ is the speaker, are certainly spurious. Whether our Lord's perfection of character in public life, combined with the general declarations of his freedom from sin, establish, or were intended to establish the fact, that Jesus, through the whole course of his private life, was completely exempt from all errors and failings of human nature, is of no great intrinsic moment, and concerning which we have no sufficient data to lead to a satisfactory conclusion." It appears that Mr. B. cannot make up his mind on this point; in this he differs from Dr. Priestley, who has given it as his opinion, that Christ was a sinner. How then are we to know their opinions by searching the Scriptures, when they differ so widely one from another?

Mr. B. says, "The whole mythology concerning angels is destitute of all foundation in the Jewish and Christian revelation. Revelation, therefore, is no more responsible for the existence of angels, good or evil, than it is for the existence of witches. It cannot be proved, that the appearances in human shape to Abraham, to Lot, to Joshua, and others, were any thing more than temporary phantoms." It is certain, however, that such a temporary phantom was called Jehovah, the Redeemer, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and was worshipped by the patriarchs. But at present we are not enquiring into the truth of Unitarian opinions, but only shewing that it could not be known that they held such opinions, without looking into their writings.

On what principle then does Mr. Harris object to the same method of discovering the opinions of the Jews? To be sure, he tells us his reasons in the following words. "Our reverence for the Bible is too great, and too sincere, to allow us to make the experiment." "Of all the cants which were ever canted in this canting world," says Sterne, "the cant of hypocrisy is the worst, but the cant of criticism is the most tormenting." Yet the worst of all is when we meet with them both together in the same place. Nothing weaker in argument, or more disgusting for its hypocrisy than this, ever appeared in print.

Unitarians, if we can believe them, have too much reverence for the Bible, to look into Jewish writings to find out the religious opinions of the Jews. We have already noticed some fine specimens of their reverence for the Scriptures, and we may now lay a few more before the reader. Mr. Harris refers us to Mr. Yates, as a distinguished writer of their sect; the following will shew whether Mr. Yates is willing to subject his own opinion to the authority of the Scripture. "If it be asked," he says, "what kind and degree of evidence would be sufficient to establish the doctrine of the Trinity, thus understood, I reply, no evidence whatever, not even the clearest declarations of the Scriptures themselves. For its own intrinsic absurdity is more decisive against it, than any contrary evidence could be for it. To use the words of Priestley, it is a doctrine which councils and parliaments may decree, but which miracles cannot prove. Agreeably therefore to the axioms laid down in the chapter on mysteries, we ought to reject this doctrine; even though it were plainly

stated in the Scriptures; because it is in itself impossible, and because it contradicts one of the fundamental articles of both natural and revealed religion, the unity of God."

The doctrine here declared to be so unreasonable, has been thought by the generality of Christians to be agreeable to reason; and according to the rule here laid down, what we think opposed to reason, we must reject, though supported by the clearest declarations of Scripture. The Scripture, therefore, can have no authority where its authority is most wanted. On this principle, a man who believes that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are each possessed of divine attributes, may imagine the divine Unity is opposed to reason, and reject it accordingly, though supported by the plainest declarations of Scripture. Dr. Wardlow observes, "Our Lord expressly affirms that he existed before Abraham." Mr. Yates replies, "The truth of his observation will be admitted probably by all Unitarians who believe in the pre-existence of Christ. This, as one remarks, is as much as to say, that Unitarians will believe the Bible, if it agrees with their own previous belief, but not otherwise. Dr. Priestley did not believe in the pre-exisrence of Christ, and what reverence he had for the Scriptures' establishing this point, may be seen by his remarks on John vi. 62. "Though not satisfied with any interpretation that has been given of this extraordinary passage, yet rather than believe our Saviour to have existed in any other state before the creation of the world, or to have left some state of greater dignity and happiness when he came hither, I would have recourse to the old and exploded Socinian idea of Christ's actual ascent into heaven, or of his imagining that he had been carried up thither in a vision, which, like that of St. Paul, he had not been able to distinguish from a reality; nay, I would not build an article of faith of such magnitude on the correctness of St. John's recollection and representation of our Lord's language; and so strange and incredible does the hypothesis of a pre-existent state appear, that sooner than admit it, I would suppose the whole verse to be an interpolation; or that the old apostle dictated one thing and his amanuensis wrote another."

Mr. Marshall speaks of the assertion of our Lord's divinity as giving "that character of paradox and absurdity to the Scriptures, which makes it the duty of every honest and sane mind to reject them with scorn." All we have heard of Mr. Worsley is, that he styles himself a Minister of a Dissenting Congregation, and dedicates his work to the Members of the Unitarian Fund; we therefore suppose him to be one of that fraternity. And he tells us, that "Mankind have resembled each other on every spot, whether savage or civilized; wherever a society of them has been formed, they have soon departed from the beautiful simplicity of natural religion, and have imagined some of themselves inspired to introduce new ideas into the worship of the Divinity, and new characteristics into his disposition, and also into his nature. With the Hebrews, and the northern nations, he has assumed a similar character; the Lord of Hosts, the God of war: nor was the Jupiter of Rome less famed for his warlike achievements." Where his beautiful religion was to be found before any

human society was formed in the world, and before the new idea of the Lord of Hosts was introduced by some person thinking himself inspired, Mr. Worsley has not informed us. Such are the men who have such veneration for the Scriptures, that they will not read a paraphrase or comment of the Bible written by the ancient Jews. But since the Jews crucified the Saviour, and have attempted to justify their conduct, their writings are not thought to be dangerous by the Socinians, but to contain the "sublime and all ennobling doctrine." Hence says Mr. Harris, "Let me however adorn my pages with the Jewish confession of faith, the faith of the modern Jews."

His other objections must be *briefly* noticed, and even that will be more than they deserve, The man can write with elegance, and even with splendour of diction; but if his readers look for truth, reason, and argument, they will be miserably disappointed. He objects to my quotations from Jewish writings, because the meaning is not clearly expressed. "One Being is described," he says, "as the beginning of all things; the other as our God. Then was not the beginning of all things his God? If Mr. Scott himself can make out any rational meaning in the words of his Jewish commentator, I shall give him more credit than I do now for the wisdom of his Rabbi's." To this I reply, that some of the quotations are so plain, that they cannot be misunderstood; and these alone are sufficient to prove the point for which they were all introduced. And even in the quotation which he has here noticed, every unprejudiced mind will make out a rational meaning; it was evidently the meaning of that Jew, that there is some kind of plurality in the Almighty, which does not destroy his unity. The scope and drift of a writer may often be clearly made out, when his thoughts are confused, and his phraseology uncouth, and even when fable and absurdity are mingled with truth and propriety. The Jews believed that the Messiah would make them a feast of the greath Leviathan; but even by this absurdity, we might prove that they believed in a Messiah. They likewise expected that the bodies of all the Jews who died in foreign countries, would be rolled through caverns of the earth at the resurrection, till they came to the land of Judea, where they would all rise together; but even by this extravagant notion, we may prove their faith in the resurrection. If Mr. Harris's argument proves that the Jews did not believe in a Trinity, we can by the same argument prove, that they did not believe in a Messiah, nor in the resurrection, nor in any article of faith whatever.

In speaking of the Jews who lived before the end of the old dispensation, and of those who have lived since the commencement of the new, I have called the former the ancient, and the latter the modern Jews. This Mr. Harris, whose critical sagacity nothing can escape, endeavours to turn into ridicule. He asks, "Who are modern Jews? those, I should think, who are now alive, or who have lived, at the greatest extension, within the last hundred years." This, I acknowledge, I never knew before, and therefore did not confine it within the bounds of one hundred years. But for this information,

I might still have blundered when speaking of ancient and modern history, or of the Old and New Testament.

From little things, let us proceed to great ones; to "*mountains of incredibility,*" which Mr. Harris finds in my discourse. "Here," he says, "it is stated, that a whole nation, for ages believing in the Trinity, looking forward to the fulness of time when one of their divinities should assume human shape; and yet as soon as they behold him, deny him to be their God, put him to death, instantly renounce their national belief in a Trinity, and continue unchanged in their new faith of one God in one person to this very hour." But we have to ask Mr. Harris, where is this statement to be found? not in any thing I have ever written. The mountains of incredibility which he finds, are of his own making. In my statement, I have not spoken of Christ as one of the Jewish divinities, because I did not know they had more than one. Nor have I spoken of his assuming human shape, because I thought he had assumed human nature in reality. Nor have I spoken of the Jews changing their sentiments instantly, because I thought this would require some time. It would require some time for the Christian Fathers to dispute the point with the Jews, and to confound them by Jewish writings; and after the Jews had experienced the difficulty in disputing with Christians, it would be some time before they could provide new paraphrases and comments on the Old Testament; and it is by these that we come to know their change of sentiment. My statement is, that the Jews, since the crucifixion of Christ, have changed their sentiments with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity. This is what Mr. Harris magnifies into a mountain of incredibility. But when it is considered that some who call themselves Christians have changed their sentiments on the very same point, all the incredibility vanishes away; his mountain dissolves, and "Like the baseless fabric of a vision, leaves not a wreck behind."

10. What is of more importance than to know that the Jews believed in the Trinity, is to know that they had reason to believe it: and if they did not believe it, they were guilty of idolatry, and were led into idolatry by the command of God himself. Old Jacob says, The angel that redeemed me from all evil bless the lads. A being that can redeem from all evil must be possessed of divine attributes, and the prayer here offered to him is the highest kind of worship. Besides, Jacob calls him God, and says, Before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk. The word walk here denotes all their religious exercises, as where it is said, Enoch walked with God. This angel appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire, and said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. The Jews must have known that this was not a created angel, or they would not have given him religious worship and obedience. He is called the angel Jehovah. When this angel found Agar in the wilderness, she called the name of Jehovah that spake to her, Thou God seest me. The The name Angel then must be given him to denote his office, as where he is called the Angel or Messenger of the covenant, the Lord

who was suddenly to come to his temple. As he was by office an angel or messenger, there must have been a divine being, by whom and from whom he was sent. In this the Jews were fully instructed. God makes this promise to the Israelites, Behold I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him. Now the Jews could have no reason to doubt the divinity of that being who thus sent his messenger before them in the wilderness; and they had no more reason to doubt of the divinity of the messenger who was sent; because the name of God was in him. He was to be the Saviour of the obedient, and the punisher of the disobedient; and it does not belong to any created angel to pardon sins. What the angel is here said to do for them, is in other parts of Scripture attributed to the immediate agency of God. They were cautioned to stand in awe of him, and to obey his voice, by which terms the whole of religion is expressed; for the conclusion of the whole matter is to fear God and to keep his commands. This angel Jehovah went before Israel in the pillar of a cloud by day, and in the pillar of fire by night. He took possession of the tabernacle in a visible form, called the glory of the Lord. There, and in the temple, he was worshipped in all the beauty of holiness. If this messenger, therefore was not possessed of proper divinity, the Jews practised idolatry, and were led into that practice by the command of heaven. In their obedience and worship, they made no distinction between the messenger sent and the person by whom he was sent. The Jews had therefore ground to believe in some kind of plurality in the divine nature. Besides the two persons here spoken of, the Jews were informed, that the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters of the creation; that God by his spirit garnished the heavens; that the Spirit of God should not always strive with man. They would read in the prophecy of Isaiah of a person speaking, whose hand had laid the foundation of the earth, and who says, The Lord hath sent me and his Spirit. The Jews, therefore, had reason to believe in the doctrine of the Trinity.

The writings of the Jews shew that they did believe in this doctrine; of which sufficient proof has already been given, no part of which has Mr. Harris been able to overthrow. That their notions of it were often obscure, we admit; but that they had a notion of it, is unquestionable. To what has been said on the subject, we shall add the following. The Son of Sirach calls the Word of God, Almighty, and says he is seated by the throne of God; and it was he who destroyed the Egyptians. Philo says, the divine *Logos* is the power which made the world. The divine *Logos* is the image of God; the Holy Spirit is the image of the *Logos*, and the universal light from whence all splendour springs. The divine *Logos* is omniscient and omnipotent. With God are two supreme powers; the first made, the second governs the universe. The two powers of God are unlimited and incomprehensible. The Father of the universe is in the middle of his two powers, and represents to the mind the appear-

nce, sometimes of one, sometimes of three. The most ancient Word is the Prince of angels, and the Mediator between God and man. The Logos instructs and influences the minds of men, spoke to Adam in the Garden of Eden, and to Moses from the burning bush. The divine Logos, the first begotten Son of God, is high priest of the world. The supplications of the Jewish high priest were made efficacious through the infinitely perfect Son of God. Rabbi Simeon compares God and his two powers to two lights, and says, the word Elohim contains a great mystery, and refers to a Trinity in Unity. The Talmudists apply the description of Wisdom in Prov. viii. to Messiah, and declare it was to him that God said, Let us make man. The Jewish book, called Midrasch Tillim, makes mention of three persons by whom the world was made. The ancient Cabalists distinguish God into three lights, and call them by the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

These things being considered, says Philo, it appears how God is three, and yet is but one. This, he says, was represented to Abraham in a vision, Gen. xviii. Jehovah appeared to him, and Abraham looked, and behold three men stood by him. Yet he spoke but to one, saying, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. This, he says, is a mystery not to be communicated to every one.*

II. Having now removed mountains of incredibility, I suppose Baron Munchausen may now take his station again, which he has filled with so much credit, and from which, according to Mr. Harris, I had displaced him. It is however to be recollected, that our author has not yet done proving the incredibility of the ancient Jews' believing the doctrine of the Trinity. On this subject, he proceeds, "At the period when the Israelites were led captive into Babylon, their intercourse being great with their idolatrous neighbours, many opinions were imbibed by them, which met subsequently with the strong and decided reprobation of the prophets, and of the Lord their God himself. After that period, many Jewish writings were composed, among which are the Targums, the Talmuds, the Mishna, and the Cabbala." And what are we to understand by all this, Mr. Harris? On what is the distinction founded between the strong and decided reprobation of the prophets, and that of the Lord their God himself? But what we chiefly wish to know is, whether the doctrine of the Trinity was one of the opinions which they imbibed from their idolatrous neighbours? if not, how can their other opinions, however

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* In making these quotations, and the former ones on the same subject, I have omitted the references to save room. On which account, Mr. Harris does not know whether they are quotations, or my own imaginations. But if the reader wishes to see references to thise citations, and a great number more of the same description, let him consult Dr. Peter Allix's Judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church, Dr. Dwight's System of Theology, and Simpson's Plea for the Deity of Jesus and the Doctrine of the Trinity.

strongly reprobated, invalidate this doctrine; or what has all that is here stated to do with the subject in dispute? Surely any person with a just claim to the reputation of a grain of common sense, may see that all which is here stated can have nothing to do with the point in hand, unless the doctrine of the Trinity was among the opinions which the Jews imbibed in Babylon. I have been led to suppose, that the Jews were more free from erroneous opinions, at their return from Babylon, than when they were taken into captivity; paticularly from such opinions as were connected with idolatry; and that this improvement was the principal design of Providence in that afflictive dispensation. If they imbibed the doctrine of the Trinity during the captivity, from which of their idolatrous neighbours did they learn it? If any thing of the kind is to be found among the Heathens, is it not as likely that they learnt it from the Jews? If the Jews did learn this doctrine in Babylon, how is it the prophets never reprehended them for it, since they so frequently and strongly reprobated their other erroneous opinions? Or, if the prophets were infected, how did they happen to escape the reprehension of the Lord their God himself, which Mr. Harris supposes to have been so often given on other, and in his opinion, on less important occasions? However, if the Jews did imbibe this doctrine from their neighbours, they must, I suppose, have had it after it was imbibed, and in this case, what becomes of the mountain of incredibility contained in the assertion, that the ancient Jews believed in the Trinity; or in the other assertion, that they have changed their opinion on this subject? Is it not as credible, that they should change their opinion once, as that they should do it twice? My assertion, which appeared so monstrously incredible, supposed the Jews to have changed their opinion on this subject only once; but if they had no such opinion when they went to Babylon, and imbibed it at that place, and have abandoned it again, they must have changed twice at least; which leaves us with two mountains of incredibility instead of one. Such a skilful disputant is Mr. Harris, and the same person who a few lines before has been speaking of smiling at crude conceptions, torturing of history, and illogical conclusions.

11. When Mr. Harris is speaking of Dr. Wardlow's publication, he says, "Both Mr. Fox and Mr. Scott adduce their statements of the plural terminations of the names applied to God in the Old Testament from that source." That was a work which I had never seen, or I should have been glad to have drawn some useful information from it, and mention this only to shew how little dependance can be placed on what are stated as facts by my opponent. He brings in Mr. Yates to answer the arguments drawn from the plural names of the Almighty, and as I understand this person has been answered by Dr. Wardlow, I am content to leave him in such hands, with the exception of a remark or two. "The plural termination," he says, "is employed in speaking, not only of the true God, but also of false deities." But this does by no means prove the point for which it was produced; because names which were proper for the true God, might be very improperly applied to false deities. But yet, such

names would be given to idols, by such as wished to make them resemble the true God, when they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images. In whatever sense they used these borrowed names, when applied to false deities, it cannot change the original sense in which they were used in reference to the Almighty. Besides, all that is produced from Yates does not account for the plural forms of speech used by our Creator. As where he says, Let us make man in our own image. Man is now become as one of us. Let us go down and there confound their language. Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? "These plural questions thus used by the Deity, demand our attention. Three solutions of the question have been offered; the first is that given by the Jews, who tell us, that in these forms God speaks of Himself and his angels. But may we not ask, upon this occasion, Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or, who hath been his counsellor? With which of the angels did He at any time vouchsafe to share his works and his attributes? Could they have been his coadjutors in the work of creation, which he so often claims to himself, declaring, He will not give the glory of it to another?

A second account of the matter is, that the King of Heaven adopts the style employed by the kings of the earth. But does it seem at all reasonable to imagine that God should borrow this way of speaking from a king, before a man was created on the earth? Besides, as it hath been judiciously observed, though a king and governor may say *us* and *we*, there is certainly no figure of speech that will allow any single person to say *one of us*, when he speaks only of himself. It is a phrase that can have no meaning, unless there be more persons than one concerned. What then should hinder us from accepting the third solution given by the best expositors, both ancient and modern, and drawn from this consideration, that in the *unity* of the *divine essence*, there is a plurality of persons, coequal and coeternal, who might say with truth and propriety, Let us make man, and, Man is become as one of us."*

Mr. Harris, being elevated by the assistance of Mr. Yates, assumes a very lofty tone, defies all opposition on this part of the subject, and seems determined for once to strike a decisive blow, fall on whom it may. "My opponents," he says, "as is usual with writers of the class to which they belong, place a great reliance on the plural pronouns which have been employed by the Deity. It is an argument on which I am perfectly willing to join issue. They deem it unanswerable, and view it as their tower of strength. These expressions occur perhaps in half a dozen instances in the Bible, but thousands of examples can be adduced, in which God speaks of himself, and is spoken to and of, in the singular pronouns. In every language, instances may be brought forward, in which an individual person speaks of himself in the plural form; but not one single example can, I apprehend, be exhibited, where three persons speak of

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* See Bishop Horne, and likewise T. H. Horne on the Trinity.

themselves in the singular form. Is it then reasonable or just, to make thousands of passages, plain and explicit as human language can render them, bend their self-evident meaning to half a dozen texts which are not so clear, and which may with the strictest propriety be interpreted agreeably to the host with which they may seem to be in opposition? The few following passages will manifest the general tenor of the Old Testament on this point: Thou art God, even thou alone. There are none holy as the Lord, for there is none besides thee, &c. These are a few of the twenty thousand instances in which the singular number is applied to God; and ought we to give up the self-evident meaning of this cloud of witnesses to the oneness of the Deity, because, from the use of the plural pronouns in half a dozen instances, it is inferred that God is three?"

In reply to all this, we grant, as far as men are concerned, three persons never speak of themselves in the singular form. But then, as God is not such a one as ourselves, a form of speech which would be very improper for us to use, may be used by him with the greatest propriety. Three men should invariably be spoken of as three; but the divine Being, though existing in the person of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, may with the utmost propriety speak of himself as one; because a plurality of divine persons does not destroy the unity of the divine essence. The argument therefore drawn from three men never speaking of themselves in the singular form, does not hold against the Trinity, unless it can be proved, that the divine Being does not exist in a manner peculiar to himself; a proof with which Mr. Harris has not yet furnished us.

We admit that "in every language, instances may be brought forward, in which an individual person speaks of himself in the plural form." But it has already been shewn, that no figure of speech will allow a single person to say *one of us*, when he speaks only of himself; and hence, when Mr. Harris affirms that these half-dozen texts can on their principles be interpreted with the strictest propriety, he is altogether mistaken. But what are we to do with only half a dozen texts against twenty thousand? We shall venture to look them in the face, because we have heard of one chasing a thousand, and of two putting ten thousand to flight. Amongst all the texts here spoken of, not one of them stands in opposition to a Trinity in unity; and hence, all the evidence they furnish against us is twenty thousand times nothing at all. Were we to collect evidence for the Trinity out of the Scriptures, we should not be confined to half a dozen passages, nor to as many thousands; we might bring forward all such as give the same titles to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, as are given to the Father. Such as ascribe the same attributes to each of the three persons, as eternity, immensity, omnipotence, and omniscience; such passages likewise as ascribe the works of creation, providence, and redemption, equally to the Father, to the the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Such as speak of them being all engaged in the pardon or punishment of sin, in raising the dead, and judging the world; and as their being proper objects of divine worship. And this great multitude of passages would not be produced

in opposition to other passages, but so as to make the whole Scriptures harmonize together. Both ourselves and our opponents can bring a multitude of passages in proof of the doctrines which each professes; but there is this difference between them and us; the passages which they collect, on the unity of God and the humanity of Christ, are as favourable to our system as their own. But all the passages which we bring, relating to the Deity of Christ, and the personality and Godhead of the Holy Spirit, are opposed to their system, and totally subversive of it.

After Mr. Horne, in his treatise on the Trinity, has produced a multitude of passages in proof of our doctrine, he adds, "The Scripture cannot contradict itself. Every part of it attests the veracity of Him, from whom it proceeds; and its divine inspiration raises it above those human productions, in which a single false proposition may diffuse clouds of error over those propositions which are true. Now if words have any meaning, it is manifest from the evidence of the Scriptures, of which the preceding pages necessarily present only a brief summary, it is, I say, manifest from Scripture testimony alone, that the same names, attributes, perfections, works, and worship, which are proper to Deity alone, are ascribed to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; and as this evidence has been presented in the language of the Sacred Writings, I do not see how it is possible to evade the force of this necessary conclusion from Scripture testimony; viz. That there is only one God; that in this Deity there is a plurality of persons; that this plurality is limited to three; and in the words of St. John, that these three are one. And since all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, we therefore conclude, that our faith is established on the immoveable foundation of eternal truth; and our confession of faith in the Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, is the same which God hath put into our lips, by giving us the sacred volume."

If we had room, we would give a whole paragraph from Mr. Harris on plural pronouns, and leave the reader to his own reflections, since it is not placed within the compass of our comprehension. The first sentence may serve as a specimen. "It is obviously absurd to consider the narrative language of Moses as meant to reveal, from inspiration, the literal words that God spake; for the very idea of speech in God is in accommodation only to our apprehensions of things; and the audible utterance of a voice from God was in itself an extraordinary miracle." What his drift in all this is, I cannot conceive, unless it is to insinuate, that the Almighty meant one thing and Moses wrote another; and even in this case, why is narrative language supposed to be more dark and ambiguous than any other sort of language? We should have thought it more likely to be plain, familiar, and easy to be understood. It is said to be absurd to suppose that Moses meant to reveal the literal words that God spake. But if he has not revealed the mind of God on the subject, in words that we can understand, he has made no divine revelation. Be this as it will, we have nothing for our direction but the

words which Moses has given us, declaring them to be the words of the Almighty; and if we dispute his inspiration, we can no more prove the unity of the divine Being from what he has written, than we can prove the Trinity. A man as well qualified as our author to darken counsel by words without knowledge, might make as many cavils about the words which Moses says God spake when he gave the Law; and by this means, the preceptive part of the Bible might be as effectually eluded as the doctrinal part. He proceeds to state, that the very idea of speech in God is in accomodation to our apprehension of things. By this we should have supposed Mr. Harris to mean, that no words whatever were spoken by the Almighty; but in the next part of the sentence he adds, The audible utterance of a voice from God was in itself an extraordinary miracle. Here, in contradiction to his former statement, he allows the Almighty to have spoken with an audible voice. Why the miracle is here introduced, is equally mysterious; it no ways answers his purpose, unless he can prove that the Almighty cannot speak intelligibly, not even when he employs a miracle for the purpose. Upon the whole, there is not so much "accommodation to our apprehensions of things," as will enable us to determine what he meant either to affirm or to deny, which is going as far as a man can go, who is determined to set all contradiction at defiance.

He seems to think, that in reference to plural pronouns, Providence has been signally displayed in opposition to the Trinity. "The wonder is not," he says, "that these passages occur, but that their number is so small. It looks almost like an interposition of Providence to prevent any idea inconsistent with his unity from being embraced by his creatures." But if all ideas are inconsistent with the divine unity, except those of Unitarians, would it not have looked more like an interposition of providence, if all plural names, and other plural forms of speech had been omitted? especially when it is considered that these plural forms of speech have led both the ancient Jews, and the primitive Christians into the belief of a Trinity. And this seems to be the natural result of what the Scriptures teach on the subject. "God said, Let us make man in our own image. No sensible reason can be assigned why God should here speak of himself in the plural number, unless he consists of more persons than one: and it is further worthy of remark, that while, in this declaration of the divine purpose, terms are employed expressive of plurality; the style of unity is resumed in the record of the execution of that purpose: so God created man in his image; in the image of God created he him.

The laws and ordinances established among the Jews were designed to guard that people from idolatry and polytheism; on the recollection of this circumstance, it appears extraordinary that Moses, when he is describing the creation of the universe, should, in order to express his conceptions of the Deity, introduce a term (Elohim) which implies plurality, and frequently connecting it with verbs and persons singular, should use that term thirty times in the same chapter." "But the plural noun Elohim is not unfrequently associated,

in grammatical construction, with verbs, adjectives, and pronouns, in the singular number, as in the following passages, which are literally rendered from the Hebrew:—Ye cannot serve Jehovah, for he is the Holy Gods. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holies is understanding. Thy makers is thy husband, Jehovah of Hosts is his name. Remember thy Creators in the days of thy youth. And the predominant use of the words Jehovah Elohim, or the Lord thy Gods, which occur not only in the Decalogue, when first delivered, but also not fewer than one hundred times in the law (the word Jehovah implying the unity of the divine Being, and Elohim a plurality in that unity), it must be allowed, that nothing can be more plainly marked than the doctrine of the Trinity is in the ancient Scriptures." Yet Mr. Harris, in reading the Scriptures, admires the interposition of Providence in preventing any idea of plurality in the divine nature.

But if we can prove, that the Scriptures express some kind of plurality in the divine Being, Mr. Harris, being determined that we shall derive as little advantage as possible from this circumstance, proceeds to say, "But I would also ask my orthodox opponents, admitting that the term is in the plural form, and may be rendered Gods, Why is the number restricted to three? By what authority is the stand made here? Is it not solely because you have been previously taught there are three persons in the Godhead, that you thus force the meaning to bend to your own preconceived opinions? The Word may as well mean three hundred as three, and there is no greater inconsistency in the supposition of the larger number, than there is in the smaller." In answer to this, we are ready to admit, that a plural noun does not confine the number to three; but if our whole creed is not expressed in one passage, by what principle can we be prohibited from obtaining information from other parts of Scripture? If we turn to the ninth chapter of Luke's gospel, we find it is written, And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all they had done. In this place, the plural noun apostles leaves the number undefined; but yet, we have no hesitation in saying, that here it signifies twelve; because we learn this by the first verse of the same chapter. But a person, determined, to dispute the plainest points, might object and say, that twelve hundred is as likely to be meant as twelve. To which we might reply, that we have never read of Christ's having twelve hundred apostles; but the New Testament frequently mentions twelve, which confines the plural noun in this place to that number. And in the same manner we must reply to Mr. Harris. "The word," he says, "may as well denote three hundred," or "three hundred and thirty millions;" but then we do not read in Scripture of so many persons to whom all divine perfections are ascribed. But we read of three, and of three only, distinguished by the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to whom all divine attributes are ascribed, and by whom every divine work is said to be performed, and to whom religious worship is commanded to be given; hence we conclude, that every plural form of speech expressive of the divine Being denotes three persons in the Godhead, and no more.

The creation of the world is attributed to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; and to each of these three is ascribed that providence by which the world is governed. We are baptized in their names, and they are prayed to without any mark of distinction, for those blessings which none but God can bestow. Each of them is declared to be eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and immutable. The divine Law is called the law of God, the law of Christ, and the law of the Spirit of Life. In the same sense we are said to tempt God, to tempt Christ, and to tempt the Spirit of the Lord. We are said to sin against them, to be pardoned and saved by them. The mind of God, the mind of Christ, and the mind of the Spirit, are spoken of as the same thing. Each of these three has the title of the Holy One, and each of them is said to be the fountain of life. Each of them is said to quicken us, to dwell in us, and to teach us divine knowledge. With them we have fellowship, by them we are directed, and by them we are sanctified. If the reader wishes to see a reference to all the passages of Scripture on these subjects, let him read Jones on the Trinity. If Mr. Harris will give as good reasons for three hundred, or even for four persons in the Godhead, as we have done for three, we will abandon the doctrine for which we are contending; and we shall freely allow him to bring any passage of Scripture he pleases to bear upon the point. In proving the doctrine of the Trinity, he wishes to confine us to a plural noun; but if he was so confined, how would he prove the divine Unity? He would find this more difficult than to declaim at random about "three hundred and thirty millions of Gods."

Our author quotes Mr. Yates, to solve the mystery of plural names by a rule of grammar; who tells us, "that the plural termination of the Hebrew names of God is agreeable to a common rule of syntax." But can any person believe, that the most learned among the Jews never understood the grammatical rules of their own language? It is certain they did not consider the plural termination of the name of God as a mere expression of dignity, but thought there was a further mystery contained in it. Mr. Jones, speaking of the word Elohim says, "The Jews would persuade us not to consider this word as a plural noun but on some particular occations. Whoever will be at the pains to examine their reasoning, will find it to be very childish and inconsistent, wholly owing to their hatred against the Divinity of Christ, and the notion of a Trinity. But when a Jew is become a Christian, and the stumbling-block of the cross is removed out of the way, he can then allow the name Elohim to be plural, as readily as other men; and it is one of the principal points he chooses to insist upon, to convince the world that his eyes are open, and he is sincere in his profession of the Christian religion. John Xeres, a Jew, converted here in England, about forty years ago, published a sensible and affectionate address to his unbelieving brethren, wherein he lays before them his reasons for leaving the Jewish religion, and embracing the Christian. The Christians, says he, confess Jesus to be God, and it is this which makes us look upon the Gospels as books that overturn the very principles of religion,

the truth of which is built upon this article, the unity of God. In this argument lies the strength of what you object against the Christian religion. Then he undertakes to prove that the unity of God is not such as he once understood it to be, an union of person, but of essence, under which more persons than one are comprehended; and the first proof he offers is that of the name, Elohim. "Why else, (says he,) is that frequent mention of God by nouns of the plural number? as in Gen. i. I. where the word Elohim, which is rendered God, is of the plural number, though annexed to a verb of the singular number; which demonstrates, as evidently as may be, that there are several persons partaking of the same divine nature and essence." As we may presume this converted Jew understood his own language, can we believe he would have used such an argument, if the whole mystery of the plural name of God may be resolved by a common rule of syntax?

The ancient Jews believed that the word Elohim denoted some kind of plurality in the divine nature. Philo, speaking of this word, says, it is used for the divine Being, in relation to his two powers; the two powers by which the world was created. The Talmudists were so persuaded of a plurality expressed in the word Elohim, as to declare, that the seventy interpreters did professedly change the notion of plurality couched in the Hbrew plural, into a Greek singular, lest the king of Egypt should conclude that the Jews as well as himself had a belief of polytheism. Whether this account of theirs be true or false, it shews that the most eminent men among the Jews were of opinion that the word Elohim expressed a plurality in the divine Being, and that they knew of no rule of grammar by which that plurality could be taken away. In their comments on Sam. xxviii, 13. where the woman whom Saul consulted said, I see (Elohim) the Gods ascending, they conclude that two persons appeared, whom they take to be Moses and Samuel. For this conjecture they have no other foundation than the plural word Elohim, by which it appears they had not seen Mr. Wilson's Hebrew Grammar quoted by Mr. Yates; which gives us as a rule of syntax, that words expressing dominion and dignity, are commonly put in the plural. For the want of this grammatical knowledge of their own mother tongue, the Talmudists have invented the following story; Moses, they say, was startled at God's speaking in a plural form, and remonstrated against the danger it might occasion, and at length resolved not to write the words which expressed a plurality, till he had God's express order for it; which God gave him, notwithstanding the danger which Moses represented might follow. This story shews, that the Jews were sensible of a notion of plurality in the Hebrew text.

Rabbi Simeon, author of the book Zoar, speaks in this manner; Come and see the mystery of the word Elohim: there are three degrees, and every degree by itself alone; and yet notwithstanding they are all one, and joined together in one; and are not divided one from another. Can any man be persuaded, that the Jews never understood their own language, till Mr. Wilson wrote his Hebrew Grammar? Mr. Wilson tells us, that nouns in Hebrew which ex-

press dominion, dignity, and majesty, are commonly put in the plural. But if so, why is the word Jehovah always written in the singular? for there is no word more expressive of dominion, dignity, and majesty. Is it not more likely, that Mr. Wilson has obtained his rule of syntax from the modern Jews, who have invented it for the purpose of contradicting the Christian religion? What a propensity they have to such a pratice, may be seen by the following quotation from Dr. Peter Allix.

"The mean while, we cannot but take notice, how that doctrine of the Trinity past current among the Jews of the ancient synagogue, though they were as zealous asserters of the unity of the Godhead as our Socinians can pretend to be at this day. No doubt the ancient Jews could have found as many contradictions in these two doctrines of Trinity and Unity, as the Socinians do, if they had not been more disposed to study how to reconcile them together, being satisfied that both these doctrines were part of the revelation which God had made to their fathers."

"We cannot say so altogether of the modern Jews, who are very much alienated from the doctrine of the Trinity, by seeing much clearer revelations of it in the New Testament, and especially since they are treated with disputes against the Christians, that make Christ to be the Messiah, or second person in the Trinity, which they can by no means endure to hear. This has set them to hunt for ways to avoid these texts that speak of a plurality in the divine nature, and in this pursuit, they forsake their ancient guides, and strangely entangle themselves, and contradict one another."

"Some of them flatly deny that any of these plural words do denote any plurality in God, but say, they ought to be understood as if they were written in the singular. Others confess that they do denote a plurality; but that plurality consists of God and his angels, whom he joins with himself as his counsellors."

"For the Jews since Christ's time, we are the less concerned what they say; because when they had once rejected their Messias, the Lord Jesus Christ, they soon found, that if they stood to their traditional expositions of Scripture, it could not be denied but he whom they had rejected was the Word, the Son of God, whom the fathers expected to come in the flesh; but rather than yield to that, they would alter their creed, and either wholly throw out the Word, the Son of God, or bring him down to the state of a created angel, as we see some of them do now in their ordinary comments on Scripture. In consequence of this alteration, they are forced to acknowledge the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, worshipped a created angel, and have left themselves no way to excuse them from idolatry therein, but by corrupting their doctrine concerning religious worship, and teaching that it is lawful to pray to these ministering spirits, which is effectually setting up of other Gods, plainly opposite to the first commandment of their law. Some of themselves are so sensible of this, that they cannot deny it to be idolatry."

From what is stated above, we may see the reason why Socinians are so anxious to adorn their pages with the creed of the modern

Jews. It may however be observed, that the Jews have not totally effaced the doctrine of the Trinity from their writings; many vestiges of it still remain; and some of them, who are comparatively modern authors, agree exactly in this article with the ancient synagogue. And they found their belief on the same Scriptures, including the plural names of the Almighty. And in this they are followed by the Christian fathers. And can it be supposed, that all these commentators were ignorant of a common rule of syntax, which we are told will solve the whole mystery of plural names? or can it be believed, that Wilson's Grammar gives a better exposition of Scripture than was given by all the Doctors of the ancient synagogue, and by all the Fathers of the Christian church?

12. Mr. Harris has such a propensity to give a false statement of his opponent's arguments, that we may often perceive his guilt, when we cannot discover the source of his temptation. "Mr. Fox," he says, "and Mr. Scott rely much upon the benediction commanded to be pronounced upon the children of Israel, under the Law; Num. vi. 24---27." By this the reader is led to believe, that I had pleaded the passage as a reproof of the Trinity, or in some sense or other given my own opinion of it. But such is not the fact; and if he was capable of making such a mistake, he is not a very formidable adversary; and if he did it wilfully, it was a mean artifice, which men of sense and integrity cannot but despise. I have stated, what the Jews say upon the passage, to shew that they believed the doctrine in question; but that was no proof that I placed any reliance at all upon the passage itself, as a proper foundation for their sentiments. The second word in the Hebrew Bible is a verb in the third person singular, though joined with a nominative case in the third person plural; and the Rabbins thought it contained a mystery. They perceived the first letter to be the initial of Son, the second of Spirit, and the third of Father; and from this circumstance, they concluded that it was intended to express these three characters, the Son, the Spirit, and the Father, who were engaged in creating the world. This would have answered my purpose to shew that the Jews believed in the Trinity; but at the same time, I could place no reliance on that word as a proof of the doctrine.

How Mr. Harris manages those passages on which I do place reliance in the controversy, his remarks on the following passage may serve as a specimen. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. "With respect," he says, "to the passage from the Corinthians, if system did not blind men, that would soon be as clear as the other. If it be a prayer at all, it is not one addressed to the "infinite three," but the Father of lights. Only reflect what absurdity the orthodox attach to the passage. The apostle devoutly wishes that the communion of the Holy Spirit may be with his brethren. Did he mean them to partake of or to divide God amongst them? Let Protestants at least beware of the ground on which they are treading. If the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Godhead, can be partaken of, the step is easy to the feast of the Romish church

on the wafer Deity. Such ideas could not be in St. Paul's mind, for he was too well instructed. It was his anxious wish that the grace or favour of the great Head of the Church, the love of their heavenly parent, and the miraculous influence of the Spirit, might be with them and upon them." I have given this entire, that the reader may for once have a fair view of his method of explaining Scripture, and may see what light can be thrown upon a passage when a man is not blinded by system. He does not know whether this is a prayer at all, but he knows it was not addressed to Christ; but how he came to know the latter, when he could not know the former, we cannot discover. We know that the prayer was offered to the Father of lights; but how it is proved, that Christ is excluded from this address, we cannot conjecture. The apostle was in the habit of praying to Christ, as where he says, Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work. And he describes Christians as all those who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. By what means then are we to ascertain, that in the passage under consideration, the apostle's request for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to be with the Corinthians, was not addressed to our Saviour himself? We are admonished to "reflect what absurdity the orthodox attach to the passage. The apostle wishes that the communion of the Holy Spirit may be with his brethren." And where is the absurdity of all this? "Did he mean them," says our author, "to partake of or to divide God among them?" It is with considerable reluctance that we quote words so shockingly profane. He proceeds to say, "If the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Godhead, can be partaken of, the step is easy to the feast of the Romish Church on the wafer Deity." But does not the Scripture teach us, that believers are made partakers of the divine nature? that he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him? Where then is the absurdity of supposing that we are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Godhead? If there is any absurdity in it, it must be in the Scriptures, and not merely in the comment we have put upon them. If an avowed infidel were to burlesque the Scriptures in the manner Mr. Harris does here, he would discover both his own ignorance, and his malice against the Christian religion. But let us hear his own exposition of the text. "It was his anxious wish that the grace or favour of the great Head of the Church, the love of their heavenly parent, and the miraculous influence of the Spirit, might be with them and upon them." Wherein does this differ from the comment which he calls an absurdity? It is no doubt intended to differ widely, and this difference we may see, if we take the words in connexion with Socinian principles. Mention is made of the favour of the great head of the church. But when the great head of the church is made out to be a mere man, who has left the world, and of whose powers and employments we have no knowledge, of what use can his favour be to us? and what made the apostle so anxious to obtain it? He was anxious, we are told, that the influence of the Spirit might be with them and upon them. Does Mr. Harris, by these expressions, with them, and upon them, mean that it was not to be in them? if so,

he contradicts the scripture, which declares the Spirit to dwell in believers. If this was not his meaning, they could not have the Spirit in his sense of the word without partaking of it; and therefore his explication as well as our own prepares us to feast on a wafer Deity. Why is the apostle's wish confined to the *miraculous* influence of the Spirit? This, we grant, might be included in the apostle's anxious wish, but there appears no reason from the passage, nor from any other part of the New Testament, to confine it to this sense exclusively. There is far more reason to understand it of the ordinary influences of the Spirit, by which our sanctification is promoted. Because miraculous gifts were not designed to extend to all ages; they were not given to all Christians; they were not essential to salvation; they were not always confined to good men; nor always used for a good purpose. The apostle knew, and he taught the Corinthians to know, that there is something to be obtained from the Spirit, more valuable than its miraculous influence. Covet earnestly, he says, the best gifts; and yet I shew unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, &c. I. Cor. xiii. 1-3. And as the apostle taught them that love was more excellent than the power of working miracles; so he likewise taught that love is the fruit of the Spirit. How then is it possible for any man to believe that the Apostle's anxious wish for the Corinthians to have the communion of the Holy Ghost did not include its sanctifying influences? In what sense does Mr. Harris use these words, when he pronounces them in the form of a blessing? That he has any idea of miraculous power being conveyed he will not pretend; and if no other kind of influence from the Spirit is to be expected, the repetition of these words in the form of a blessing, is a base mockery of the people. Then only reflect what absurdity the heterodox attach to the passage: they pray for such a blessing as they know and declare will never be granted. The exposition he has given of this text may serve to shew how Unitarians contrive to leave out the essentials of Christianity, with ensnaring plausibility. They plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, with so much art and dexterity, as to conceal the mischief, and escape detection. Here mention is made of the grace or favour of the great Head of the Church, and likewise of the influence of the Spirit: by such language we might be led to conclude that the man was a Christian; but when we come to develope the sense in which these expressions are employed, we find, by the great Head of the Church, he means a mere man only. By his grace or favour he cannot tell what, and by the influence of the Spirit, something with which the people of God have no concern in the present age of the world. Thus every thing vital to Christianity is expunged from the Scriptures.

By what has been selected, the reader has had a fair sample of Mr. Harris, and will be able to judge both of his tenets and his method of disputation. Our limits prevent us from proceeding any further; and we desist with less reluctance, as we expect he will be answered by others, whom he has attacked in the same publication.

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